No. 344 (New Series), Vol. 7. October 22, 1938

The PASSING SHOW

TWOPENCE

TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY

by G. Manning-Sanders

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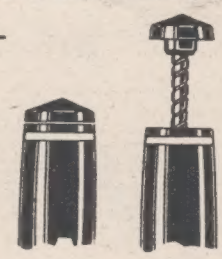

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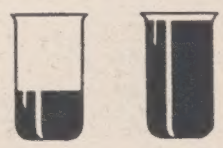

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The PASSING SHOW

No. 344 (New Series), Vol. 7. October 22, 1938

YOU'RE TELLING US!

A MAN of courage is Mr. John Lewis of Shepperton-on-Thames. Not many married men would dare to criticize the vapidity of feminine conversation, but to do so when the conversationalists are one's own wife and her women friends denotes an almost reckless disregard of danger. However, here is the hero to up and speak his little piece for himself.

"Coming home early the other day, I plunged right into the middle of a tea-party my wife was giving," he tells us, thus providing added proof of his courage. "Talk about talk! I have been dazed ever since by the meaningless babel of conversation that buzzed about my ears.

"Not one really intelligent sentence was spoken, not one original idea uttered. But," he continues, bringing a small

dollop of balm to Gilead, "I am quite prepared to admit that some, though not all, men are equally verbose and vapid when they are chatting together.

"I wonder," ruminates Mr. Lewis, wisely switching from the particular to the general, "how many unnecessary words are spoken and written every day? In our so-called civilization, ideas spring from words instead of the reverse, arguments spring from ideas, quarrels from arguments, riots from quarrels, wars from riots, and so on indefinitely.

"A cure for all world problems would be to limit everyone to one hundred and fifty words a day for a week. Then they would find that they got on so well that they would never return to their old, mischievous garrulity when the ban was lifted!"

This department regrets that it cannot lend the wholehearted support to Mr. Lewis's idea that his courage merits. There was once a philosophical poet named Edward Young whose *Night Thoughts* were "tops" among the best-sellers of his day. And the aforesaid Mr. Young once unburdened himself of the profound truth that "men talk only to conceal the mind."

We can't help thinking that it is not the number of words men utter that matters so much as the nature of them. Three words of studied insult can do more harm than a veritable spate of inanity, and, anyhow, "choice word and measured phrase" are born, not of a passive tongue but an active mind.

In fairness to Mr. Lewis, we must admit that Uncle Joe, whom we sounded on the question, gave it as his considered opinion that twenty-eight words *per diem* would suffice him. "Pint, please," on thirteen occasions and "Pint, quick," when the bar parlour clock registered one minute from zero hour should, he avows, be ample for most men.

He was equally emphatic on the question of whether women would be able to survive the test as successfully as men. "The only time I've ever known a woman to hold her tongue," he confided to us, "was when it had been stung by a wasp!"

And writing of wasps, here is a stinging epistle from Miss J. Lister of Abbeydale, Sheffield, who obviously regards us as something less than brutish beasts. "Whilst reading your reply to Mr. N. D. Snaith of Kendal," she starts, "I was surprised and indignant to find that you could not resist a sly dig at our fashions. What exactly do you mean by your remark, 'If children can reach as high as mothers' skirts'?"

Without waiting for us to make the obvious answer that we mean just that, she goes on: "Maybe you prefer us to wear long trailing skirts which sweep the floor for you as we pass. Well, let me tell you that if we feel like wearing them in that or any other style, we shall, and we don't require comments from you or others of your class."

Swaying dazedly on the ropes we had just sufficient strength to stagger into the centre of the ring, only to stop another straight left. "If you think," the relentless Miss Lister continues, "that you look charming and handsome in your horrible ox-blood suits, plus yellow ties spotted with red dogs and the like, you can take it from me you're sadly mistaken. And what's more, if you print this letter, I hope all members of the opposite sex take the hint" ("Hint!" Ye gods, if that's a hint, what must a real outspoken comment be like?) "and substitute their loud-speaking clothes for something more soothing to the eye."

About the only thing that could soothe our own eye at the moment would be a pound of raw beefsteak, but we still have strength left to suggest that what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and if Miss Lister claims the right to dress with a lofty contempt for masculine opinion, why can't the ox bloods of today ignore feminine prejudices? Anyhow, regrettable though it may be, it is mere man who dictates what women shall and shall not wear, for are not the very great majority of the world's most famous fashion designers men?

Fortified by this consoling thought we now intend to sally forth and buy ourselves something extra special in the way of a gent's natty suiting—and if it *has* got a tasty vermilion stripe in it, so much the better.

Another reader, Miss C. Hope of Epsom Downs, has something to say about clothes, although she manages to do so without pouring scorn on our heads. "Why," she asks, with sweet reasonableness, "is it that men cannot be taught to sew their buttons on to their own garments?

"I have a nephew who, as a very small boy, showed great interest in needle and cotton and was in a fair way to becoming a good needleman when his father's

scorn, aided by the laughter and jeers of other small boys, put a stop to his progress.

"But just think what a help Bill could have been to his mother if he had continued with his needle and thread—especially as his mother hated sewing!"

The great obstacle to small boys succeeding at this worthy pursuit seems to lie in the fact that they just can't cotton on to it and so it always gives them the needle. However, we feel sure that if more boys took up the gentle art of sewing buttons in their youth many of them would not now be sewing mail-bags in their cells.

Our recent references to talking having brought us a sharp slap on the wrist from a Westmorland reader, who is a staunch upholder of the gentle pursuit, we show a proper masculine diffidence in commenting further on one of the sister crafts. But we feel obliged to remind Miss Hope that zipp fasteners—not to mention bachelor buttons—are a very present help in time of sartorial troubles.

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss.

How Professor Polland, the famous dermatologist of Graz University, Austria, prescribes for

FALLING HAIR

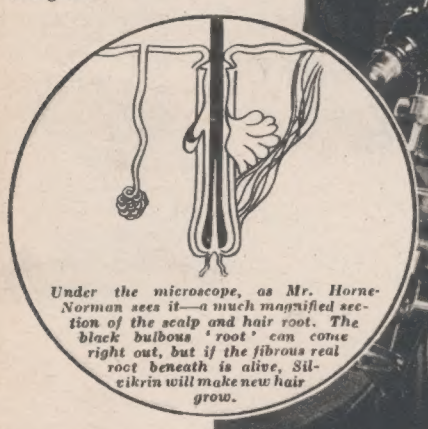
Dr. Polland writes: 'Falling hair is an inevitable sign that the scalp is being starved of its natural food—the roots fail and baldness will result unless this natural food is applied externally. Silvikrin, which I always prescribe in such cases, is the hair's natural food: besides stopping hair falling and preventing dandruff, it actually makes new hair grow.'

(Above) Mr. Horne-Norman, whose falling hair was bringing him rapidly to baldness. See how healthy his hair is now—thanks to Silvikrin. Mr. Horne-Norman writes—

le, Queenscourt, Wembley, Middx.

"For several years I have suffered from dandruff accompanied by the loss of hair with the consequent result of becoming "very thin on top". Six weeks ago, I was induced by my hairdresser to take a course of Silvikrin treatment. The result has amazed me. Dandruff has completely disappeared and new hair is already appearing. In view of the many so-called hair remedies on the market, I should like to emphasize my appreciation of Silvikrin."

(Signed) L. Horne-Norman.



Under the microscope, as Mr. Horne-Norman sees it—a much magnified section of the scalp and hair root. The black bulbous 'root' can come right out, but if the fibrous real root beneath is alive, Silvikrin will make new hair grow.

WHAT YOU NEED:

SILVIKRIN LOTION for your daily hair-dressing to protect you from dandruff and falling hair, to keep the scalp healthy and the hair vigorous, lustrous, and well groomed. If you still possess a healthy head of hair, the regular use of Silvikrin Lotion will maintain it in perfect condition. Bottles, 1/6, 3/6, 8/-.

PURE SILVIKRIN, the concentrated natural hair food in cases of severe dandruff, heavy loss of hair, thinning hair, bald patches and threatening baldness. 6/-, sufficient for one month. *From chemists, hairdressers and stores.*

To sufferers from dandruff and falling hair—even those afflicted with baldness—the amazing work of Dr. Weidner comes as a godsend. For it was he who discovered the fourteen separate and distinct organic elements that the bloodstream should be supplying to the scalp for healthy hair growth. These he compounded, in Nature's exact proportions, in Silvikrin. Silvikrin, therefore, because it is what the hair roots should be getting *naturally*, quickly clears up dandruff and prevents falling hair, *and if the root is alive, makes hair grow.*

Look up your hair trouble in the table—see what you need—and get your Silvikrin to-day

Silvikrin DOES GROW HAIR

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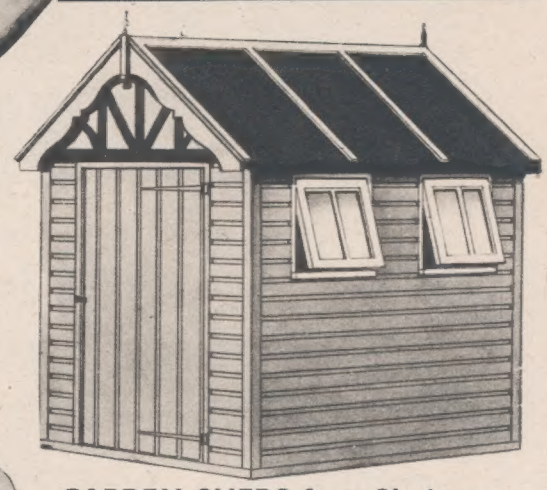

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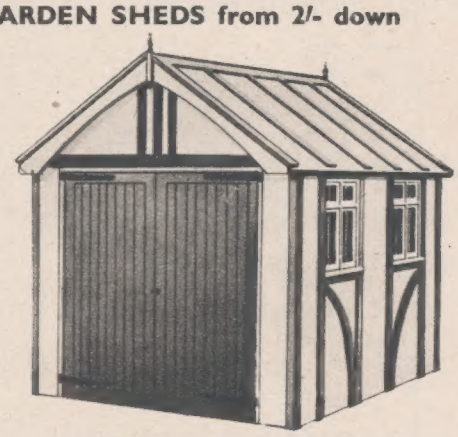

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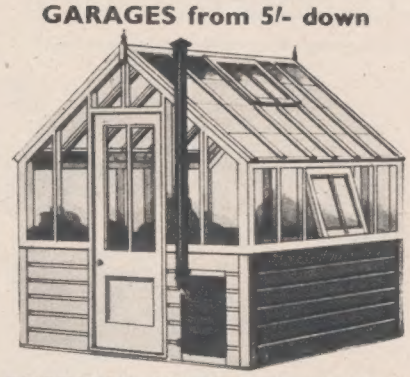

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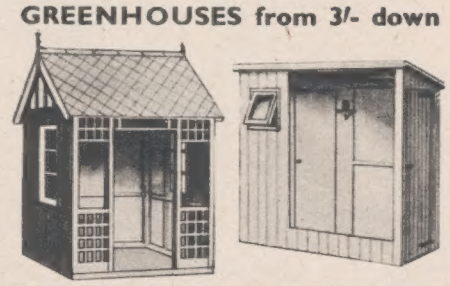

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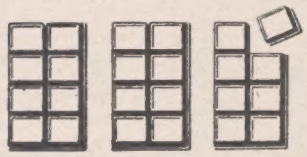

Each Cadburys Filled Block costs 2d. and has 8 sections of the same soft or toffee centre filling. So when you spend, say 6d., you can choose three different centres and make up your own perfect assortment. And don't forget the amazing value..

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'Toffee' is the latest of Cadburys Filled Blocks—the new way of buying chocolates that lets you pick your own pet centres, and gives you 'more bites for 2d.'

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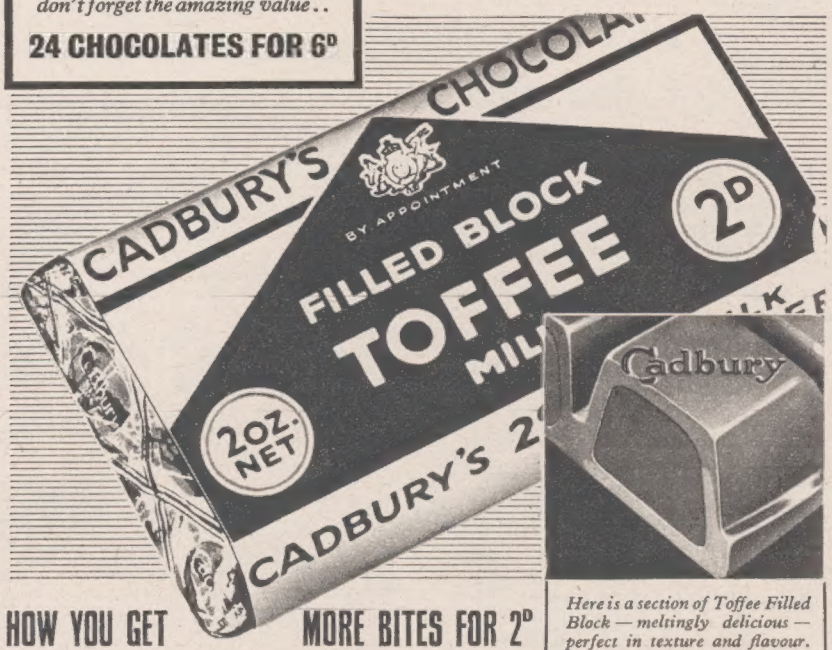

Here is a section of Toffee Filled Block — meltingly delicious — perfect in texture and flavour.

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Making chocolates in block form, eight at a time, costs less than making them one by one. Money is saved, and it's passed on to you in better value, in more bites for 2d.

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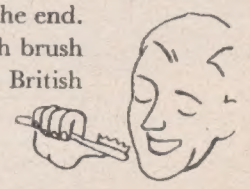

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for your first exercise in the morning and your last exercise at night

The blow of the cudgel missed him, but the horse's shoulder whirled him to the ground

NEAR BAGHDAD

The introduction of good Scottish sense into this weird tangle of Oriental intrigue brings the villain to well-merited confusion

BY HAROLD LAMB

ILLUSTRATED BY SINCLAIR CALOW

"READY be'ind?" said the sergeant over his shoulder.

And the six-wheeler, the desert convoy car, backed out of its New Street garage, scattering the beggars and the tea sellers with their brass urns. The convoy car, starting out of Baghdad at seven o'clock in the morning, on its twice-a-week run to Damascus.

Ready, thought Kari, and please hurry. Out of the streets, across the river——

"Beg pardon?" said the Englishwoman beside her. "Did you speak?"

"Did I?" Kari said. "I must have been thinking out loud."

"It sounded," the Englishwoman with the two children looked at the girl, "as if you said something. You're the Hilla nurse, aren't you?" She herself was an officer's wife, going home after two years' residence in Iraq.

"No," Kari laughed, her voice rising over the churning of the motor. "Not any more."

For three years she had been the graduate nurse at Hilla Mission Hospital, with its hundred beds. She had been Kari Valgard, that Scotch girl of a Norwegian father, and she had come out to the East to work in a hospital at five shillings a day. More than one thousand days, with only a few weeks rest in Baghdad. That city pictured with palms and hanging gardens in the tourist folders—the City of the Thousand and One Nights.

"Oh," said the Englishwoman, "you're going home?"

"Yes," said Kari.

The car was turning in the street. The tourist in the seat behind the driver had on a good-looking grey suit—he was opening his morning mail, running his fingers under the flaps of the letters. He looked cool, and satisfied with the morning, and very healthy. Back of him a fat Levantine hugged a leather brief case.

Then, before the car could gather speed, a stocky figure appeared moving beside it, tapping on the door. A figure in soiled white ducks, looking as if he'd sat up all night in them. He had no hat, and he carried only a worn suitcase with some hotel labels on it.

When he stepped into the aisle of the car, his face changed, as if someone had hit him.

"He *has* been making a night of it," Kari thought.

He was about old enough to have graduated from a university at home—about as old as the cool-looking tourist. He had one of those broad, stubborn heads with a small chin, and deep greyish eyes. Just for that second he looked ready enough to tear someone with his hands. It passed, and he shambled on to a seat in the middle of the car.

"My dear," the Englishwoman whispered, "he's chucking Baghdad." Kari didn't care. "He couldn't stay, of course," the Englishwoman whispered on. "Didn't you hear about him? Buck Chapin, the junior assistant to the American consulate?"

Kari shook her head. Athwart the road ahead a Kurdish girl with a baby on her arm was hauling at a donkey's rope in a panic.

"Colonel Byers told me how it happened," the woman went on.

Buck Chapin, the Englishwoman said, hadn't been in Baghdad a year. He'd been alone in the American consulate that afternoon when the money had been left with him. By a traveller named Sprague, with an American passport, who had called to leave some papers and more than six thousand *tumans* in Persian paper money for safe keeping. Officially, of course, as they all knew, Persian paper couldn't be taken out of that country. But quite a bit of it turned up in Baghdad, and was traded in, in the bazaar.

This person, Sprague, handed the money, with an oil lease of some kind, to Chapin in an open envelope. After looking it over, Chapin sealed the envelope and locked it in the safe.

Sprague came for it in ten days. Chapin being out of the office at the time, another member of the consulate took the envelope from the safe and gave it to Sprague, after the traveller identified

(*please turn over*)

himself. And Sprague opened the envelope under the eyes of the consulate people. No doubt whatever about that. He used a pocket paper knife to open it. A man of precise habits.

The money was missing. All but some two hundred *tumans* in small notes folded up in sheets of blank paper. Sprague was more upset about his oil contract than his money, but he claimed that quickly enough from the consulate.

Young Chapin admitted that he had known the money was in the envelope, but insisted that he had not touched it.

What finished Chapin was the statement of a Levantine date merchant named Aravang that the young American that week had tried to get him to purchase six thousand *tumans*, and he had refused to buy.

After that, the American consulate repaid Sprague the full amount of his loss and Chapin was through.

"Of course, salaries in the consular service," the Englishwoman observed, "are so inadequate. . . ."

At noon when they stopped to eat from the lunch baskets the company provided, a haze of the dust had drawn closer about the car, and the sun had vanished. Chapin didn't eat anything, Kari noticed. He went out to talk to the Arab helper who was fiddling around the radiator—avoiding the other passengers.

When he got back in, he brushed past Kari at the water tank. His eyes were half closed, unmoving. It wasn't a case of fever, the nurse in Kari decided—rather, sleeplessness and stupor of fatigue. Something weighty and metallic in the side pocket of his coat touched her hip. It was heavier than a cigarette case or loose change, and it might, she thought, be a revolver.

Chapin acted like a stupid boy. As if he carried a mark on him that anyone could see. Even the tourist in the grey suit kept glancing at him curiously.

Until, at five o'clock that afternoon by Kari's watch, the convoy car halted. The Englishman at the wheel began to argue with the Arab helper. They had lost the track they were following, and the dust curtain hung so close about the car they could see no distant landmarks.

Kari got out with the other passengers, stiff with the hours of dozing in a seat. The Arab mechanic insisted that El Matl was ahead of them, on the left. He started off into the haze to look for landmarks, and Chapin spoke for the first time to the tourist.

"Want to have a try," he suggested, "the other way?"

The other man pondered, his dark eyes intent. Kari heard a curious sound as if bells were chiming behind the dust curtain.

"No, thanks," the tourist said.

"Suit yourself"—the young American grinned without mirth—"Mr. Sprague."

Sprague? This must be the man, Kari remembered, who had been robbed and repaid at the American consulate. She wondered if Chapin had followed him on the convoy car. But it was natural enough, if both of them were leaving Baghdad, that they should take the same car.

"I say!" muttered the sergeant. "Listen to that."

The echo of bells in the air had become a familiar *clong-clang*. And the Arab mechanic came running out of the dust curtain, pointing to the car.

"Pleess," he panted, "go back to the automobile."

At his heels, grotesque shapes moved through the haze. Bells jangled.

"What in blazes——?" Sprague exclaimed.

Camels. Unloaded, Kari saw at once, and not tied together. And so, a herd being driven. And the men who drove them appeared out of the dust at a gallop, bearing down on the car.

"Jebel Chadafis," said the Arab driver.

The fat Levantine scrambled first into the car, clutching his brief case, while the sergeant helped the children and their mother in after him. The tribesmen were clamouring, in falsetto voices.

Kari was at the car door, looking over her shoulder, Sprague pushing at her, and shouting at the sergeant, "Start your motor." She was watching Buck Chapin. Standing facing the Arabs, drawing the revolver from his coat.

A rider, seeing the revolver, swung toward Chapin, raising a long cudgel.

"Aow!" barked the sergeant. "Don't shoot, sir."

Then everything moved at once. Chapin stepping back, turning and tossing the revolver toward the car door. "Take it, if you want it." The blow of the cudgel missed him but the horse's shoulder whirled him to the ground. "That's done it," grunted the sergeant, who had caught the revolver.

Then the sergeant looked at the revolver, swinging the cylinder out, staring at two cartridges in it. Only two. "No use putting up a fight with that."

"Look at that——" barked Sprague.

Chapin was on his feet, his face twisted with anger, grasping at the rein of the Arab's horse, forcing it back among the others, away from the car.

"*Yah ahmakat!*" he shouted at them. "O fools! O dwellers in a dung heap. Who is your *jeeb al rais*? Who is headman among ye?"

His anger caught at them. Someone pointed out a man who had a Turkish scimitar in his girdle.

Chapin had no weapon. He snarled at the *rais*, demanding if this was not the land of the Jebel Chadafis? Here, he cried, the convoy car had lost its way. They were searching for El Matl. Where was the well, and the post of El Matl?

The Arabs knew, because they all pointed in the same direction, ahead and to the left.

"Two cartridges!" Sprague was repeating. "Look at them. Did you ever hear of a man putting in just two cartridges? He meant them for us." His bright eyes swept the Arabs. "Get going—quick!"

The sergeant looked worried. He was responsible for all the passengers. And those Arabs were as uncertain as spilled mercury. If they started shooting——

"You can't go without that boy," said Kari suddenly.

"Go on!" Chapin's voice reached them. "What are you waiting for?"

"Excuse me, Miss," said the sergeant, reaching for the door. He had the car in gear, moving forward. "The officer at El Matl had best deal wi' this."

The car jumped forward, and Kari caught her breath. Ducking under the man's arm, she jumped to the ground and ran back to the horsemen and the figure in white ducks. She was frightened, but Dr. Ferguson had often told her at the hospital that Arab tribesmen would never harm a foreign woman. And, of course, the convoy car would not go off now. She thought she could get this boy out of trouble.

But the convoy car kept on going until it vanished in the dust haze. Some of the Arabs followed it.

It was nearly seven when Kari saw two eyes of light moving over the ground. Before long they heard a motor car

Then they stopped, staring, fascinated, at the girl walking toward them. Here, evidently, was something they failed to understand.

And Chapin scowled at her. "What do you think you're doing?" he exclaimed.

"I'm trying to get you out of a mess." She made her voice sound casual, and she held herself very straight. Dr. Ferguson had told her the tribes were like animals, only dangerous when they were starving or frightened. "Why didn't you come back to the car?" she demanded.

Chapin's haggard eyes touched hers, and dropped. "I don't know. Anyway, these birds are going to hold me for ransom."

"Are they?" Kari considered. Turning to the *rais*, she said briskly, "*Awafikh!*"

The Arab with the scimitar looked at her uneasily. "Health!" he responded.

"In the name of God," Kari went on, trying to remember the right words. "I am the family of this *effendi*. I go where he goes."

The other tribesmen edged closer, to hear the better. They were quiet enough now, and the chieftain began to finger his beard. "*Aiwah!*" he grunted assent.

"Hold on," said Chapin, startled, "you're not my wife——"

"I've got to be," she assured him, "an honest woman. It's very important. Only a loose woman would run after a man who wasn't her husband. At least that's what these Arabs think."

"Gosh!" said Chapin.

"We are Inglisi," the girl told the chieftain, "husband and wife. We travel in the face of the Inglisi Sirdar. We travel on the land of the Jebel Chadaf. What is your mind toward us?"

Something like admiration gleamed in the thin face of the *rais*. This young woman without a veil and with unbraided hair stood very straight—she spoke in a voice as clear as a bell. She must be valuable and undoubtedly she was British. This Nazarene. To take horses or camels was profitable to the Jebel Chadaf, but to take such a married girl as this would mean the start of a blood feud. Being a British girl, it would mean payment of a money fine by all the villages of the Jebel Chadaf.

The chieftain of the Chadaf was too cunning to make such a mistake. "*Har'm,*" he said to his men. "Forbidden."

"Yes," they assented. "Forbidden. There is calamity in her."

They turned their horses, and began to round up the scattered camels. The bells jangled again, and without a word the riders disappeared into the dust curtain, going away from El Matl.

"Now," said Kari, hiding the relief she felt, "it looks as if we're going to be here a long time."

Making herself comfortable on the nearest rocks, she considered the tracks of the convoy car. "Why didn't you come back to the car?"

Chapin laughed. "Do you really want to know? Well, I was afraid. I wanted to blow the head off a guy in that car."

Hysteria, Kari thought. "No one else?" she asked. "I mean, you didn't want to do for two of us, did you?"

Fumbling with an empty cigarette package, Chapin shook his head.

"I've felt like murdering people," Kari observed, "these last weeks. But no one in particular. Just people. What is your particular urge?"

The lines about his mouth tightened. "You can skip that."

"Right." Kari glanced at him fleetingly, and offered him a cigarette. It was strange to be so close to the thoughts of a man who had nothing to do with Hilla Hospital. "My name," she said conversationally, "is Kari, and I used to be a nurse, until I chucked it. Now I'm rolling home to Glasgow, just because there are hats in shop windows, and the pavements are wet at night, and I don't care if I never have a job again."

She wished she knew more about psychology. Why, if Chapin had stolen from his consulate, should he want to shoot Sprague?

Chapin turned the cigarette in his fingers slowly. "I never took those Persian *tumans*," he said harshly. "And no one at the consulate touched them."

"*Tumans?*" Kari wondered. "What are they?"

Then Chapin began to talk. He told her just what the Englishwoman had told her—how he had taken the papers and the money from Sprague, and had sealed them in an envelope, and locked up the envelope in the office safe. He hadn't forgotten about that money—not quite three thousand dollars.

He'd been sending drafts home, forty dollars every month—to his sister, who was in high school. He'd written home that Baghdad was swell, and how fine it was to be in the service.

"Then you needed money badly," Kari remarked impersonally.

"I didn't touch that envelope. Sprague got it out of the safe somehow."

"How?"

"I don't know. Maybe somebody else could figure out how he did it. But they all think I was the one——" He shook his head. "That fellow in the bazaar, Aravang, lied. Then this morning by pure chance I find him on the car with Sprague. Seeing them together like that made me—made me——"

"Yes. Still, you put the two cartridges in that revolver of yours before then, didn't you?"

"Two cartridges?" Chapin looked blank. "Were

"In the name of God," Kari went on, "I am the family of this *effendi*. I go where he goes." The tribesmen hedged closer to hear the better

COLOUR ILLUSTRATION BY W. ELMORE BROWN

there two? I didn't look. I just put it in my pocket.'"

Yes, Kari thought gloomily, you did. And if ever a man told a guilty story, you did. Only, she believed it.

It was nearly seven by her watch when she saw two eyes of light moving over the ground. Before long they heard a motor, and a touring car came up the line of the convoy's tracks. When its headlights picked them up, it stopped and a slender figure hopped out from beside the driver. A solitary officer armed with a walking stick.

"Hullo," he called. "I'm Nicholson from El Matl. The Chadafis turn you loose?"

"I think," said Chapin without interest, "they were afraid of my wife."

Kari started to speak, then closed her lips. Nicholson glanced at them.

"Your—I see. Er, quite, Mrs. Chapin." He laughed. "The Chadafis have been on the prowl, taking Chour camels. Guilty on one count, you know. Suppose they balked at a woman. Sporting of you to go back, Mrs. Chapin. Yes. 'Fraid we'll be late for dinner."

Kari stood at the car's door, her small face intent. "Do you realize, Captain Nicholson, that my husband risked his life to get the convoy car away?"

"Rather." Nicholson hesitated. "Don't want to put my oar in. None of my business, of course. But your countryman at the post, Sprague his name is, has the wind up about you, Chapin. Swears you were carrying a weapon to do him in—tried to get him away from the car, out into the desert, alone. Says he had to accuse you of theft in Baghdad. Not that I want——"

"But you can do something, Captain Nicholson," Kari insisted. "Six thousand Persian *tumans* were stolen from the American consulate. And either Mr. Chapin or Mr. Sprague must have taken them, mustn't they? You can search both of them, at El Matl."

Perceptibly, the officer stiffened. "Hardly. No authority, you know."

"But El Matl is the last post in Iraq. We'll be in French territory before sunrise."

Nicholson shrugged. "The American consulate accepted responsibility—paid back the money."

"Forget it, Kari," Chapin said.

Nicholson felt relieved when the girl said nothing more. Sitting by the driver, as they raced along the tyre tracks toward the post, he thought she was a good sort. Maternal instinct and all that. Wrought up by the scrimmage with the Arabs, probably. But he, Nicholson, couldn't imagine Sprague burgling his own money out of the safe at the American consulate, and leaving another envelope there instead——

"Can you give me," Kari asked suddenly, "two envelopes and some paper at the post? I've just remembered I ought to write two important letters."

Then she kept quiet, until they slowed down for the entrance to El Matl. The red beacon light of the post glowed against the night sky. The Iraq soldiers saluted their officer, and moved the bar aside from the gate. Kari read the big sign at the entrance: "*Warned not to stray out of sight of post, as many travellers who went out for a stroll have lost their way.*"

Stone walls, with barbed wire at the top shut out the desert. By the well in the courtyard the familiar convoy car stood empty. It might, Kari thought, be a jail. A gramophone shrilled in the dining quarters.

It sang and chorused at her, while she addressed two envelopes in the reception room, and sealed them. A wordless anger made her fingers brisk and careful—anger at slow-thinking, feckless Buck Chapin, and at dapper Captain Nicholson, who lived by rules and regulations. Swiftly she washed her face, brought her hair into some kind of order, and called one of the Arab servants before venturing into the dining-room.

The others hadn't waited. The Englishwoman looked up from feeding the children, with a mumbled, "So glad, nurse."

They were all at the long table with an immaculate cloth and shining silverware. "Well, you were lucky," Sprague greeted her. He was quiet enough now, slightly amused. "I suppose the tribes would not meddle with a British lady, eh?"

"Oh, no," said Kari amiably. Here were two men, and one had stolen three thousand dollars from the American consulate, and lied about it. Chapin had withdrawn into his blank silence, something smouldering in his eyes. Something that would explode in a minute.

"But," objected Nicholson, his routine mind offended, "Mrs. Chapin must be an American now, you know."

The Englishwoman looked up, incredulous. "Why, nurse, you're not married!"

"I'm not a nurse," said Kari, "and I do happen to be Mr. Chapin's wife, for the moment."

Fleetingly Sprague's eyes passed over her, as if to take stock of her anew. The Levantine merchant stopped eating his soup.

(*please turn over*)

"Because," said Kari, "the Arabs understand a woman going to the defence of her man."

Then the Arab servant brought the two letters to the table, looking around inquiringly. "Mr. Sprague?" he asked.

That gentleman nodded, and held out his hand. Raised his brows when he saw the sealed missives bore neither stamps nor postmarks. Ripping one open with his finger, he took out a folded sheet of paper that was blank on both sides.

Kari quivered inside. Her knees were wobbling under the table, and she felt like running away. If she could only say just the right thing! "Please," she begged silently, "let it work—I'll pile stones on that heap. Ever so many!"

Sprague was looking up at the Arab servant. "How did you get this thing?"

"A lady, sir."

Frowning, Sprague glanced at the other envelope, addressed like the first to him at El Matl, in care of the Convoy Company. When he ripped it open, he found another sheet of blank paper inside, and went dark with anger.

"Someone," he said harshly, "is trying to play a very bad joke."

He looked at the Englishwoman, and—quickly—at the Levantine date merchant, and at Kari.

"It's not a joke," said the girl quietly.

"Then I'd like to know," Sprague demanded, "what you think it is."

Kari noticed for the first time that his English was precise and clipped, without Chapin's Midwestern twang. "I suppose," she answered, "you'd call it theft. At the consulate, Mr. Sprague, you opened that other letter with a knife, didn't you?"

For a second Sprague stared at her. Then he smiled. "Why, yes." He drew a small silver knife out of his coat. "With this. Like to see it?"

Kari's head bent over it—cheap Oriental work, the kind anyone could buy at any bazaar.

"But you opened these with your fingers," she said, "just as you did your mail, this morning in the car. Nearly everyone does, of course. You used that paper knife at the consulate, didn't you, because those two envelopes——" She reached over and placed the two on the table side by side. One had a corner hanging loose, and the other was ripped jaggedly along the top. "Because those two envelopes had to look exactly alike."

"I don't know," Sprague frowned impatiently, "what you're talking about."

"Yes," Kari cried suddenly, mercilessly, "you do. You carried out the six thousand *tumans* in the envelope they gave you."

"That is libel, my girl, under British law. And before witnesses. Captain Nicholson, I'll ask you to remember this."

Chapin's hand moved, closing upon the back of his chair.

"Buck!" Kari pleaded, her eyes hopeless.

"You leave her out of this," the boy said thickly. "You cheap crook——"

"He's not a cheap crook," Kari insisted. "He's an international thief, who has been a bit too clever."

"Crickey!" ejaculated Nicholson. But Sprague got up out his chair, his face like a mask.

"You heard that, Nicholson?" he snarled. "Now I'm going to ask you to search me, and search my luggage." Impulsively, he turned to the Levantine: "Aravang, get my bags out of the convoy."

With alacrity the date merchant rose, still gripping his brief case. And Kari sprang up.

"Oh, Aravang," she cried, "I'm so glad. I didn't know Mr. Sprague knew you so well. You needn't bother about his luggage. We'll search yours, instead. Leave that brief case on the table."

His round cheeks twitched, and he hugged the case tight. Aravang was a bazaar trader, and he shrank before the anger in the girl's eyes.

"You lied about Chapin *effendi*—the Yamrican!" she flung at him savagely, before Sprague could speak. And Nicholson's head came up, as if he sighted game. Kari was merciless, just then, seeing the Levantine afraid. "You swore he came to you in the bazaar, to ask you to buy six thousand Persian *tumans*. The police will put you in jail, because you lied."

Aravang's mouth dropped open, and he began to shout: "*La!* I have done nothing. It was this *effendi* Sprague who came to me, saying——"

Sprague snarled at him. "Shut your mouth. Get the bags out of the convoy. Be quick."

The mask of confidence had dropped from him, and his face was not pleasant. His eyes shifted along the table, frightened. His hand jerked at his pocket and came up with an automatic. The short barrel quivered. "You're trying to do me in, with that sneak of a girl."

Nicholson whistled softly. Kari giggled hysterically, and caught up the silver knife, striking the table gong to summon the servants.

The clang of the gong broke something in Sprague's nerves. The automatic in his hand exploded. Kari blinked, and began to cough, feeling as if she had been slapped hard in the face. She saw Sprague moving back towards the door.

And Chapin's arm moved, with his chair swinging at the end of it. The chair struck on the floor, against Sprague's legs. He staggered and hopped on one foot. Before he could get his balance, Chapin came after the chair, with his hands reaching out. Sprague turned the automatic on the yellow tousled head with the hungry eyes. Then Chapin was not there.

He was diving at Sprague's knees. It was a savage tackle and the two of them slid to the wall. Nicholson jumped for them, and caught Sprague's wrist, taking the pistol away.

Like a frightened, fat rabbit, Aravang bolted through the door. He ran full into an Iraqi sentry coming up at the double, rifle in hand.

Then Kari began to cry.

Half an hour later Nicholson finished going through the belongings of the two. In Sprague's money belt he found the three thousand dollars paid over by the American consulate, and about as much in English pounds. Not a thing out of order.

But in Aravang's brief case, he found the six thousand Persian *tumans*. Also two unlooked-for passports, in different names. One was British and the other Egyptian. Both bore Sprague's picture.

Nicholson stared at them, fascinated. "Sprague alias Brubacher, alias Idrisi. A rose by any other name!" he ejaculated. "Whoever he is, he'll have to go back to Baghdad for examination by the proper authorities." He looked up at Chapin. "Lucky for you. Clear you at your consulate."

"I'm going back there with that money," said Chapin, his eyes shining, "on the next car."

"Lucky for you your wife guessed how he stole those *tumans*."

"I didn't guess," Kari stated.

"Oh." The Britisher's blue eyes were puzzled. "Then how did you know he was a thief?"

"He had to be. Buck never did it. He wasn't clever enough."

"Oh," said Nicholson, "I see."

You see now, Kari thought. But you didn't think anything about it, or feel anything, until that pistol went off, and you had all those passports in your hands. "Falsification of a passport is a very serious thing, isn't it, Captain Nicholson?" she said aloud, and laughed a little, being utterly weary, because it was time for the convoy car to start on the night leg of the journey to Damascus, and she felt twisted inside, although she had not been shot.

When Nicholson went out to the courtyard to see the car start he found Sprague standing by the open gate, the sentries eyeing him curiously.

The gate was open to the night and the desert. And Sprague was shaking like a man with a fever. "I know when I've been framed proper," he snarled. "You did me in, all of you. Him," he nodded at the interested sergeant, who was fixing up beds for the children in the car out of bags and blankets, "letting on he'd lost his way. Those Arabs making a bogus attack, like a cinema. Chapin fixing that revolver to look like it was meant for me. That sneak of a girl, shamming she was his wife."

Nicholson studied him, realizing how frightened the man was.

"You're imagining all that," he said thoughtfully. "Odd thing. You were the only one who knew how guilty you were this morning."

He nodded slowly. "Jove, man, if it hadn't been for that young lady, you'd be going into French territory with a bullet in your brain." He pondered, and exclaimed sharply: "There's only one way you could have done it, Sprague! You had the bogus envelope slit open in your pocket, or sleeve, when you called for your money at the consulate. Jove! You opened the right envelope, and then showed the beggars the wrong 'un."

Sprague said nothing.

"This car," grumbled the sergeant, "is three hours late."

Nicholson went to find Kari, and he found her sitting on a bench where the courtyard was darkest, with Chapin's arm around her. And Chapin looked like a human being again. He looked, Nicholson thought, like a well man.

"Ready for Damascus?" he asked.

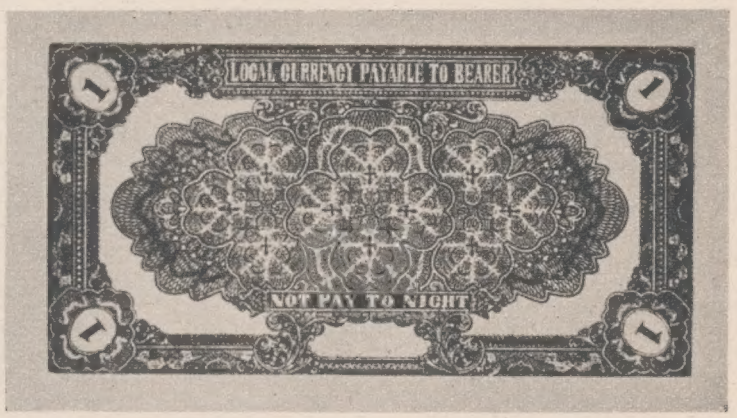
Kari looked up at him, and at the night overhanging the beacon light.

"I'm really Nurse Valgard, Captain Nicholson," she said, "and I'm going back to Baghdad."

CURIOSNAPS

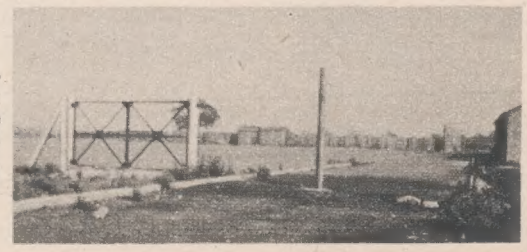
A mason in Mallorca started to build this water fountain, built too much mosaic roof and finally left it unfinished. Water was never laid on and, until recently, the lamp was never lit

The ornamentation under the eaves of this 300-year-old house in Norfolk is carried out with horses' bones. And the reason is a local bone of contention



Fluctuations in Chinese currency are so frequent that your one-dollar bill of today may be worth nothing tomorrow. Of course, tomorrow never comes—so what?

At Ipswich the wire-netting has been carried across the road and the gate placed at the side. We think someone's trying to fool us



SAILOR ON HORSEBACK

The life story of Jack London continues with his railroad adventures and with General Kelly's army on its trek from Omaha to Washington

BY IRVING STONE

Jack took incredible risks, jumped off trains that were going at full speed and rode the rods on bad lines. He was afraid of nothing; the greater the risk the greater the fun

AFTER sailing on one of the last of the whaling vessels to leave San Francisco while still a boy, Jack London returned to settle down to steady work, toiling thirteen hours a day as a stoker in a jute mill for thirty shillings a week. However, it was not long before he sickened of the wearying, unprofitable drudgery and at the age of eighteen the call of adventure became so insistent that he threw in his hand.

Unemployment in the spring of that year, 1894, had reached staggering proportions in the United States and a huge army of workless was being organized by a man named Coxy to converge on Washington and demand that Congress allocate £4,000,000 to put the men to work building roads.

In Oakland, California, where the Londons were then living, the local detachment under "General" Kelly was due to leave by train on April 6, and Jack and his friend, Frank Davis, decided to join up with the contingent. But when they reached the railway goods yards they found that the army had left some few hours earlier, and Jack decided that he and Frank would smuggle themselves on board a freight train and catch up with Kelly's men.

He had already experienced the thrills of a tramp's life when, at the age of fifteen, he had gone on the road for the first time. A lull in the oyster pirating in which he was occupied at that time had resulted in his sailing to Sacramento, California, where he started a new round of adventures.

WHEN Jack London reached Sacramento he went swimming in the river, and fell in with a bunch of boys who were sunning themselves on the sand-bar. They talked differently from the fellows he had been herding with. They were road-kids. The yarns they told had made Jack's oyster pirating look like thirty cents.

A new world was calling to him in every word spoken, a world of rods and gunnels, blind baggages and side-door Pullmans, bulls, shacks, chewin's, pinches, get-aways, strong-arms, bindlestiffs, punks and profesh. With every word they uttered, the lure of The Road laid hold of him more imperiously. He joined the push, or crowd.

He was given the nickname of Sailor Kid. The ringleader, Bob, took him in hand and turned him from a tenderfoot into a "punk" or road-kid. They taught him how to batter the main stem for light pieces, that is, beg for money on the main street. They showed him how they robbed drunks, and successfully taught him how to steal a guinea Stetson hat from the head of a prosperous Sacramento Valley Chinaman. Arrested in a whopping street fight, he served three days in jail.

Jack had soon heard expounded the law of The Road, that no kid was a road-kid until he had "ridden the blinds" over the Sierra Nevadas. One night Jack and French Kid, who had just joined the push, waited in the darkness ahead of the Central Pacific Overland and when it went past, scrambled on board. French Kid slipped, fell under the wheels and had both legs amputated.

Bob had warned Jack to deck her, or ride the top of the car, until the train passed Roseville, and then to climb down to the blind behind the mail car. But Jack had held down the deck the whole night, clear across the Sierras, through snow sheds and tunnels and down to Truckee on the other side, in a funk over climbing down the swiftly moving express train. He never confessed his disgraceful conduct to the push, which welcomed him back to Sacramento, renamed him Frisco Kid, and made him a full fledged road-kid.

After a few weeks he had tired of Sacramento and rode a freight back to Oakland. Now, three years later, he was once again "mate to the wind that tramps the world."

Jack and Frank Davis left their side-door Pullman at Sacramento, only to learn that the army had departed for Ogden at four that afternoon. They caught the Overland Limited and held her down until Truckee, where they were ditched, or thrown off. That night they tried to take the Overland east; Frank made her out, but Jack was left behind. He caught a freight train instead, and slept so soundly in spite of the cold that he was sidetracked at Reno without waking.

(*please turn to page* 28)

Astonished, she felt a hand on her arm and a presence at her side. She made a half-hearted movement, as if to remove the stranger's hand, and said, "Who are you?"

THE TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY

Rowenna's dream of romance was destined to become a reality sooner than she expected. But romance and danger all too often go hand in hand, as she discovered

BY GEORGE MANNING-SANDERS

ILLUSTRATED BY M. MACKINLAY

ROWENNA MILES leant against the granite porch of the farm and stared abstractedly over the wide moorland. In the yard, her father was preparing to set off for the market town in a dilapidated car. Generally the girl would have been interested in her father's departure, but their housekeeper, Miss Crebo, had decided to go to town also, and because Rowenna disliked Miss Crebo, she deliberately turned her attention to the far off, purple hills.

Miss Crebo, tall, angular, got into the car and glanced at Rowenna with tight-lipped disapproval. The semi-hostile glance of a level-headed, practical person towards an idler too much given to wasteful reverie. The woman who usually came to the chicken farm to do heavy work had sent word that she could not come, yet here was Rowenna, with so much to be done, rigged out in silk and trying to look pretty. Ridiculous! and it was high time the doting father should see what came of his bad training.

Mr. Miles, small, gentle, glanced at Rowenna with shy appreciation—the glance of a man taking pride in a beautiful expression of innocent, budding womanhood. The russet-coloured gown and the red shoes she wore, gladdened him. Her jet black hair was smoothed back to rest in a coil on her ivory coloured neck; he imagined that her oblique, dreaming eyes saw beyond the normal ken; that her flickering smile was an indication that she heard strange, far-away music denied to normal ears.

Miss Crebo, aware of this admiration and vexed

by the delay, broke the spell by saying loudly to Rowenna: "Tom Jarvis is late. When he comes the order is on the kitchen table. Tell him the last lot of maize was bad and that he must make an allowance for it."

Rowenna sighed and went slowly into the great kitchen to look at a calendar that advertised chicken food.

She was so absorbed that she did not hear steps in the yard or the gentle knockings on the outer door. It was only when a young, fair-haired man stood in the kitchen that she turned with a smile.

"Hullo, Rowenna," said he, in a low-pitched tone.

"Why so late?" said Rowenna. "Miss Crebo waited for you."

"A long story, Rowenna. Perhaps I'd better confess."

"Yes, please."

They sat, one opposite the other, beside the kitchen range, she in an old oak settle as if she were posed for a portrait, he in a deep chair. Tom rubbed his hands, wiped his forehead, cleared his throat and blinking because her beauty confused him, said: "I've been hiding—waiting for your father and Miss Crebo to go to town so that I'd be sure of seeing you alone."

She controlled a laugh and looked exaggeratedly demure. "Surely to goodness you're not going to propose marriage again?"

"I am. After all, Rowenna, you admitted last time that you didn't altogether dislike me. Besides, trade has bucked up during the weeks in between. I can offer you no end of things now."

"Oh, you are so practical, like Miss Crebo and like everyone else except poor daddy and me. I tell you plainly, Tom, during the six months I've been here watching how that awful and most efficient woman bosses, I feel as if I never wanted anything ever again to do with the practical side of life."

Tom rubbed his chin and smiled ruefully. "Are you comparing me with Miss Crebo, by any chance?"

"No, I'm not. I'd not do such a thing, even to my bitterest enemy. Do you know I believe she means to hook daddy? I do really."

"Rats, she's ugly and—well, I'd be sorry for him."

"You see, daddy is so unsuspecting. When she first sold him this place and later on advanced money at a high interest so that he could go on dreaming of a fortune to be made from chickens, he was grateful. But now that she's here as housekeeper, and doesn't fret him over arrears of wages, I believe he feels sort of morally beholden to her. I'm worried."

Tom thrust his hands into his trousers pockets, straddled his legs and spoke manfully. "Miss Crebo knows her way about; she isn't the daughter of an estate bailiff for nothing. But listen, Rowenna, I've a plan to defeat the dragon. I'll get our firm to pay off the debt and advance some money as well. My father has always been keen on experimental incubation. This is just the place for it. We can put in an engine to make electricity. We . . ."

Rowenna interrupted ironically. "All this is a sop to coax me to say I'll marry you?"

"Well, yes, perhaps, only the way you say it seems wrong."

"Oh, Tom, don't you see—don't you understand that it is just because you think that I'll be influenced by such a—such a bribe that I can't love you as I should. You'll never realize a woman's point of view, never, never, never! When I give my love it will be to someone who doesn't say that happiness can be bought."

Tom flushed crimson. "You mean I'm not romantic enough. That I'm not talking to you like a story book—not behaving as if I were a Prince Charming?"

"Now hush, Tom, I'm not such a child; I'm twenty today and I'll not be lectured."

Tom's face cleared, he began to search in his pocket. Presently he drew out a battered spade guinea suspended by a fine chain as a necklace.

"This is your birthday present, Rowenna. You see that dent?"

"Yes."

"Well, the coin saved my great grandfather from the bullet of a highwayman. And now I am going to be romantic. If you ever change your mind about—well, you know, about marrying me, then give the coin back and I'll have it made into our engagement ring. How's that?"

"Marvellous!" mocked Rowenna.

"You see, it's supposed to be lucky—it's supposed to protect the wearer from robbery."

"All right, and thank you, Tom; I shall value this," said Rowenna, clasping the slight chain about her neck, "and I wish daddy could wear one, too."

For some time, Rowenna talked earnestly of her dislike for Miss Crebo and her fear that she would coax her father into marriage. Then Tom, mindful of business, said: "You might come up over the moor with me. I left my car on the upper road."

"Yes, of course—if you'll promise never again to ask me to marry you. You see, Tom, it distresses me. If I didn't like you at all, then it wouldn't matter, but . . ."

"I'll promise," said Tom, gruffly, "and perhaps one fine day when you've been fooled by some precious . . ."

"Hush, that's not fair."

When Mr. Miles returned from town the first thing he noticed in the empty kitchen was the calendar with its flaming red letters. "Good gracious!" said he, "it's Rowenna's twentieth birthday!"

Miss Crebo uttered her habitual sniff which seemed to imply much, both against Rowenna in particular and birthdays in general. "She's not done anything she promised," said she, looking closely about, "and the fire's out."

"Yes, yes, to be sure," said Mr. Miles, hurriedly. "However, as the mist is rather thick I'll take a look round for her."

Miss Crebo lighted the fire and then combed her lank, mousy-coloured hair with decision. Her nose was red and her face pale, disagreeable hiccoughs shook her tall frame at unsuspected intervals. She decided that the cold ham she had eaten in the town must have disagreed with her. Her mind was directed with especial vigour in criticism of Rowenna. She felt sure the girl was making mischief. Certainly the father did not seem quite so dependent as he had before the coming of his daughter.

As the father and daughter came over the moor Miss Crebo watched them through a tarnished brass telescope that had a cracked lens but was quite capable of magnifying detail. Rowenna was telling the story of the refound spade guinea and the highwayman. Miss Crebo's thin lips stretched in a cruel smile and she jumped to a conclusion and hastily hatched a plot. She surmised that some young man from the village had brought the gift and if so then what more likely than that they should have arranged to meet again later on. And if they met and there was a reliable witness to bring tidings of what happened at that meeting to the doting father, and of how his daughter was encouraging a clodhopper, then the girl would certainly be sent away.

During tea it seemed as if a miracle had happened under the very eyes of the astonished father and daughter, so kind and gracious in her manner was Miss Crebo.

At half-past six she began to search for special needles and, not finding any, asked if Rowenna would go to the village shop for them.

"I'll get out the car," said Mr. Miles. "It won't take long to run to the village."

"The fog is very thick," said Miss Crebo, "and the car lights aren't too good."

"I'd like the walk," said Rowenna, with an alacrity that secretly delighted Miss Crebo.

Hatless and wearing a mackintosh over the silk gown she set off blithely on the errand. The damp mist settled in heavy drops on her eyelashes, collected on her hair and ran down her back in tiny intermittent trickles. The well-known shapes of the hills were being lost; even one not accustomed to the moors must know that darkness was going to fall early.

When she left the village shop with the needles, lamps were glowing hazily from windows, and the pocket torch she had brought cast only an indirect nimbus on the road.

Just as she had reached a wild piece of ground near a copse, the flash failed altogether and she had to grope slowly and rely on memory and intuition for guidance. She was resting, with one hand on a great, damp boulder, thinking vaguely of what Tom Jarvis had said to her that morning, when a voice, low-pitched and with a quality of not being spoken by a human being, said: "Dreaming?" Without hesitation or thought she answered to the unreality: "Yes, dreaming."

"That is right," continued the voice, "because realities are commonplace, dreams are of fantasy."

"Who are you?" whispered Rowenna, staring all round into the impenetrable fog.

"I am what you would have me."

"Then I would have you materialize," said Rowenna, suspecting that the episode was entirely in her imagination.

Astonished she felt a hand on her arm and a presence at her side.

She made a half-hearted movement as if to remove the stranger's hand and said again. "Who are you?"

"Does that matter?" the voice now that it was nearer was even moré persuasive, musical, deep-throated to set up echoing vibrations in her. She saw as through smoked glass that the stranger was tall, perhaps young and dressed peculiarly, inasmuch that he had something heavy and shapeless about his neck and shoulders. And now he was talking preposterously, or was it so preposterous? The voice rising and falling in a hypnotic cadence was telling in poetic phrases of how he had no entity except through one person. Of how he had been seeking from boyhood all the face of the globe to find that entity and now at last had been mysteriously guided on the moor to that place in the certainty that she would come to him. Yes, preposterous, thought Rowenna, but she did not resent the gradual, almost imperceptible presence of the stranger, so unreal, so entirely of fantasy did he seem and so much part of her yearnings and dreams rather than a sensate being of flesh and blood. His hand was on her neck groping sensitively at her features and she drew in a sudden, quick breath. If he were real then he must surely be blind, those softly groping fingers had the awareness of the blind and—yes there was no doubt of it one of the fingers was missing.

Leaning into the close embrace that had as yet no reality, feeling the warm breath of the magnetic voice that told of all the marvels awaiting the conjugation of those who shared life in its fullest, she yet had sufficient curiosity through the strange, newly-awakened emotions to recognize that it was the little finger of the right hand that was missing. And if he were indeed blind, then he needed a constant companion, one who would devote her eyes to his use, one who would guide his steps and translate to his ears all material beauty.

And now he was using the everyday terms of endearment, but expressed surely as they never had been before, giving them a new significance, endowing them with a virtue and a quality that were as little irresistible knucklings upon the very heart and soul. But now the tone had changed; there was something wistful, something of dread in it. He must go, must go, must go.

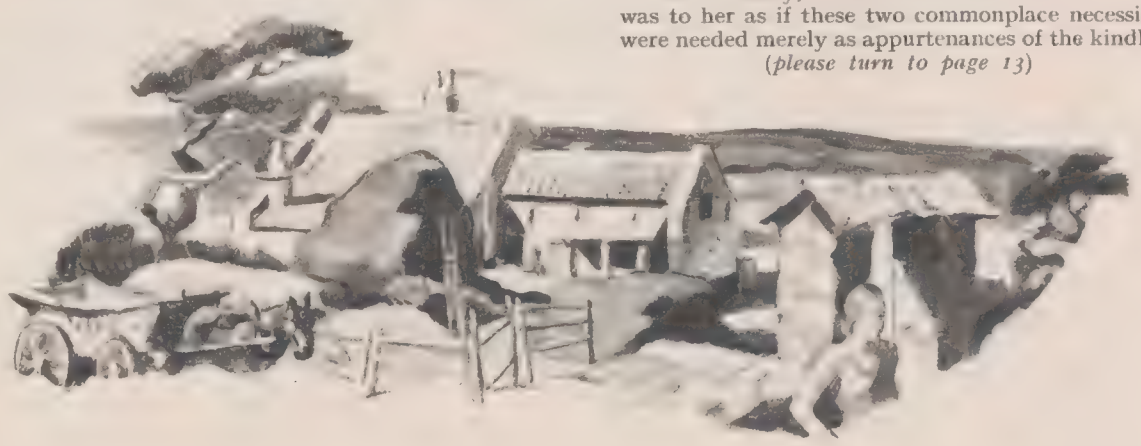
"Why?" faltered Rowenna, knowing that it was the question he had willed her to ask.

"Food," came the whisper, so ecstatic that it implied not ordinary food but that which should sustain ecstasy.

"Food!" As if the word were merely an intricate puzzle. Rowenna dwelt upon it. Yes, something to eat! Then there was no need for the stranger to go; she could so easily bring him food.

"And money," continued the voice. And it was to her as if these two commonplace necessities were needed merely as appurtenances of the kindling

(*please turn to page 13*)



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harmony. For a second only she was puzzled at the request for money, then she understood. The customary attitude over such matters was to be shy and diffident of asking as if it were of supreme importance; this dream lover understood their trivial nature.

"I will bring out food and money after . . ." She had nearly said after the household had gone to bed. She added hastily, "as soon as I can without risk of being followed."

"Can you find your way back to this same boulder?"

"Yes, every sense I have will guide me."

"Then, heart of my heart, together we will . . . But go now, that you may be the more quickly back again."

Before she got back to the farm Rowenna paused to put her own hands up to her neck and face. She entered the farm ill at ease, afraid to be confronted by the searching scrutiny of Miss Crebo. But only her father was there in his old velveteen smoking jacket and down-at-heel slippers, reading the paper with scrupulous industry. "Well, my dear!" he said, looking up with a beaming welcome, "you've been a long time."

"Where's Miss Crebo?"

"Don't know. What do you think of that chap?" He held forward the paper to display a photograph of a middle-aged man with deep-set eyes and a strange, cruel mouth.

"Handsome, I expect," said Rowenna, her mind preoccupied with how she was to get food out of the larder or find money in a house where little was.

"He'd need to be," said Mr. Miles, "he's been making a good living from doing the confidence trick on women. He escaped from Dartmoor some days ago and they've not found him yet."

In his firm, quiet voice Mr. Miles read of how the convict under various aliases had duped and victimized a score of women. Then he read out a minute description ending with "Little finger of right hand amputated three months ago in prison as a result of injury at the quarry."

Rowenna at the larder door was examining a plate of cold beef. At her father's words it slipped from her hands. "Does it say anything about his being blind?" she faltered.

"No."

He couldn't see me and he wanted to know if I was good-looking. And he must have decided I was, thought Rowenna with satisfaction as she picked up the beef and shattered fragments of china.

Her father had laid down the newspaper. She crossed the room, and while affectionately patting his shoulder, deliberately set her heel on the photograph of the escaped convict to make it unrecognizable.

They were discussing the chances of the man's escape when Miss Crebo entered rather out of breath. When she heard the news she pounced on the paper and said excitedly: "There's a reward of forty pounds for anyone that's lucky enough to find him."

Rowenna shuddered and averted her face. "I'm off to bed," she said, "I'm dog tired, somehow."

Directly she had gone Miss Crebo noticed a piece of plate on the floor and asked for an explanation. And when she heard it she uttered a low-pitched cry of triumph. "I've as good as got the reward," she whispered exultingly. "I chanced to see your Rowenna in talk with a man on the moor just now, and I'll be bound it's the convict. She means to take him food and I'll follow her. You must go quickly to Panton's Farm to telephone the police. Tell them to be at Carter's Copse and to wait till I signal with a light."

Mr. Miles, after protesting, put on his boots in preparation. "Poor devil," he said.

"That's all very fine when he's been the undoing of us women. Murdered plenty of us just for greed, I'll be bound," said Miss Crebo, violently.

In her bedroom Rowenna was a prey to anxiety. It seemed to make no difference to her determination to aid the stranger that he was a convict. On the contrary, just as when she had thought him blind, it rather increased her responsiveness to him. Was he not an outcast from society? Very well, she at least would not agree to the outcasting. She would follow him and if need be devote her life to him. If he had deceived other girls it was because they were not for him. Had he not admitted this—how he had been seeking the ideal but had never till that evening found her. Ideals were inclined to be elusive as she herself knew only too well.

Listening, she heard her father go out and presently return again. She assumed that he had been laboriously fastening the barn doors and the sheds against a possible visit of the convict. She heard his snore, she heard the high-pitched whistling sound that told of Miss Crebo's sleep. Then with confident steps she began her mission. In her pocket, wrapped in tissue paper was the spade guinea, two pound notes and a few shillings. From the larder she took beef, bread, cheese and a bottle of beer. She carried a torch, but was reluctant to use it.

It amazed even herself to find how easily her eager feet took the way to that boulder where the voice and arms of the stranger would be waiting her. Often in traversing the moor on such a foggy night in the dark it had been necessary to go slowly and think and grope frequently. Now it was as if she journeyed by a bright light that illuminated every obstacle. Only once when a far-off glow flickered and again when she thought she heard a low-pitched whistle from the direction of Carter's Copse, did she even momentarily lose speed or confidence.

When she at last reached the boulder, easily recognizable by the touch and shape and the hollow that had to be descended to it, she smiled to think of how her life from that moment when he should join her would be changed, as changed it must be, even suppose instead of his coming, a warder appeared to tell her that their man had been taken back to Dartmoor prison to complete his term. "Time can be conquered by fidelity," she mused, and heard a cautious step and then the voice that seemed to lift her from the earth in a transport of delight.

His eager hands took the food and the money. In a hurried—too hurried whisper, he said something of a crevice he had found in rocks and littered with dry bracken. He laid a hand on her wrist. As if the hand had pressed an electric light switch the rock and their two selves were instantly flooded with light so blinding that nothing was visible. A whistle sounded shrilly, Rowenna was vaguely aware of men running, of a raised voice and a struggle, then she was leaning alone against the stone looking on at a scene which was graven on her memory for ever.

Policemen and numbers of villagers were grouped about the stranger who was being bound in their midst. She recognized Tom Jarvis staring at her in amazement and presently he began to edge towards her. She saw Miss Crebo, the centre of interest, being conducted by a police inspector towards the bound convict. For a few seconds Miss Crebo stood looking down at him and he up to her. Then a shriek rang out and the tall figure sagged sideways like a thing made of sawdust. Tom leapt to her aid. He helped to carry her back to the farm.

The police inspector said to Rowenna. "A smart bit of work, Miss, your pretending to get the rascal food and that. Here is your bait back again."

Mechanically she took the bulky packet of food and the small tissue paper packet containing the two pound notes, a few shillings and the spade guinea.

"A funny thing," continued the inspector, "that the lady who informed against the chap was so upset."

"Perhaps she'd met him afore," said one of the villagers, grinning and winking.

Rowenna felt that she could have struck the grinning yokel. It was unthinkable that her dream man could ever have had. . . . No, no, of course not. The woman had been overcome by an attack of conscience at earning blood money. That was all. "How long more has he to serve?" asked Rowenna, boldly.

"Five years, miss, and a trifle more for this spree."

"Can I speak to him?"

"Why, no, miss. For though he can be smooth-tongued enough to suit his own ends he can be pretty tough when things don't go his own way."

She went back to the farm alone, trying to sort out the tangle of her emotions. Half-way, she met Tom Jarvis coming back. He took her arm and to her surprise she was glad to have the support.

"You look done in just now," said he.

"Yes, I felt it. And Tom . . ." She intended to tell him of how she had met the one person she could really love, but perhaps because she was so tired the words would not come readily.

"It's funny about Miss Crebo," said Tom. "They are getting the doctor for her."

"Yes, what was it?"

"Why, she recognized the convict as her own brother."

Rowenna stood still. Recalling the photograph she had destroyed and the fleeting glance she had caught of the stranger's face as he lay bound and snarling on the moor she knew it was true. She began to laugh softly at first and then too loudly, peal after peal, while shudders of aversion traversed her body.

"Darling! What is the matter?" said Tom, holding her more closely.

Rowenna hurled the packet of food from her and in the pocket of her gown began to tear the tissue paper till the spade guinea was in her hand. "Do you remember what you said this morning? How the spade guinea would protect me from robbers?"

"Yes, and I said if ever you gave it back to me I would have it made into your engagement ring."

Slowly, almost as if it were a ritual, Rowenna drew out the coin, pressed it to her lips, and then reaching for his hand gently laid it in the palm.

"Now, all we need is some oil"

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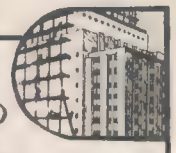

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BY MILES HENSLOW

American Clarence Birdseye (*left*) watched fish, apparently "frozen to death," come to life again when thawed out of solid lumps of ice. He experimented with goldfish and then vegetables and fruit and found the taste unaltered. The process is called "quick-freezing"

STORING food is one of the oldest problems in the world, and Mother Nature, notoriously unreliable at times, has taught the lower animals a hundred and one clever tricks to help them provide against her shortcomings. The honey we filch from the bees is one of the best.

The same instinct that makes the well-fed dog bury his bone, and the squirrel hide his nuts, has driven man to amazing lengths to make sure that he can have what he likes best—when he wants it.

Canning and refrigeration have solved the major part of the human food problem. Stored in ice, food can now be transported from one end of the world to the other, and kept reasonably fresh for a very long time. Packed in hermetically sealed cans and bottles, the same food, cooked, if necessary, can be kept against emergency, for years. In fact, only a few weeks ago, a tin of Crimean War rations was opened, and the contents were found to be quite edible.

All that is very good up to a point, but unlike the dog who doesn't mind an old bone, and the squirrel who may even prefer his nuts a year out of date, human beings want their food *fresh*. And, until recently, this was impossible with any form of preservation. Now all that is going to change, however, for one of the biggest surprises of this century has just been sprung upon the world.

At about the same time as the Crimean tin was being opened, a party of men sat down to lunch in London. They knew a thing or two about food. A tin to them would have been blasphemy. Among other things, they ate a lovely, succulent turkey, and some beautiful red strawberries.

When the last bone had been picked, and the last piece of fruit peel lay on the plate, their host said, more or less, "Well, boys, how do you feel?"

"Excellent!" was the unanimous reply.

"I thought you would enjoy it," said the host, with a smile. "Particularly the turkey. It has been dead for nearly five years. The fish, too. That was about six months old. The strawberries were quite new. They were picked in America about twelve weeks ago."

There was an embarrassing pause, and the party of men who knew a thing or two about food were silent, wondering whether to be angry or amazed. In the end curiosity won.

"How?" asked one, nervously.

"Impossible," said another. "Why, that food was *fresh!*"

"Quite fresh," said their host. "And, had you not eaten it, it would have been just as fresh in another ten years' time."

The secret is "Quick-freezing"—though in America it is no longer a secret. Five years ago, when it was introduced in more or less the same surprising way, it caught on as a novelty. But today fifty of the biggest American canning firms have taken it up, and last year more than 200,000,000 lb. of food were preserved by the new method. That figure will have increased to 300,000,000 lb. this year, they say.

Quick-freezing, or "quick-frosting," as it is sometimes called in the United States, was first perfected in that country about eight years ago. Like many other important inventions, it was discovered by accident. Fortunately the man who discovered it was very observant.

Clarence Birdseye was trapping in the Arctic regions when he noticed that fish, apparently "frozen to death," came to life again when thawed out of solid lumps of ice. Actually, of course, the fish were not dead, but merely in a state of suspended animation. Swimming along during the previous winter, they were suddenly engulfed by an icy current, and in a very few minutes were frozen solid.

This, it has since been established, happens almost every year in the cold regions, and though many thousands of fish die, many hundreds more "come to life again" with the spring thaw. Goldfish have been frozen artificially by the new process—which imitates the natural occurrence—and in nearly every case they have swum away when allowed to thaw.

Scientific investigation soon showed Clarence Birdseye why this was possible. Animal and vegetable tissue is made up of millions of minute cells, and these cells contain about seventy-five per cent water amongst other substances. Just as water pipes burst after a frost, so do these cells suffer by slow freezing. If, however, the freezing is done very quickly, and at temperatures well below zero, the water only forms small ice crystals which do no damage.

Applying this principle to meat, vegetables and fruits, Clarence Birdseye found that, on thawing, the cell structures remained unaltered—and, therefore, the food value, *and even the taste remained as it was originally*.

As everyone knows, good as it may be, chilled meat is never the same as fresh meat. And the simple reason is that slow refrigeration has broken up the cell structure, releasing the "goodness" when the meat thawed. Ordinary refrigeration takes about four hours to reach the critical ice state. The new, "quick-freezing" process takes only twenty-five minutes.

Quick-freezing by no means sounds the death knell of refrigeration as the world knows it. It merely means that cargoes of frozen foods will retain their proper taste and food value. It means that the people of one country will be able to eat the food of another in the same condition of freshness as it was grown, caught or killed.

It will put an end to all "seasons." Fruits and vegetables that now enjoy a season of a few weeks will be "quick-frosted" and stored, for consumption the whole year round. Fresh asparagus will be *fresh asparagus* in mid-winter. Strawberries, raspberries and currants will appear on the Christmas dinner table.

Oysters will no longer be eaten in months with an "R" in them, and, in all probability, due to the angle of suspended animation, they may even be alive months out of season.

Most important point of all will be the end to uneven harvests. Last year there was a glut of fruit in Britain; this year there has been a shortage. In a few years' time such a state of affairs will be unknown, for when quick-frosting plants are installed the surplus will be stored until it is needed.

In America about 60 varieties of quick-frosted food are already being sold regularly throughout the year, and include fruit, poultry, meat, vegetables and fish. Swordfish steaks, corn on the cob, ducklings, rhubarb, youngberries and blueberries are but a few interesting items from the large list.

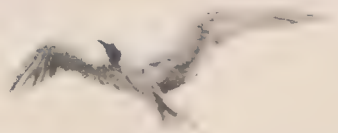
Who has eaten a swordfish steak in England? And how many have eaten fresh mangoes? Very few; but these, and a hundred other delicacies will appear on the menus of the world as a result of quick-freezing.

By the early part of next year, it is hoped, some of the comparatively unknown and perishable African fruits will be on sale in England. Fruits and vegetables from other countries will follow. And the main point is that they will not be sold at ridiculously high prices. Quick-freezing will establish a new level in prices.

Strawberries at Christmas should cost little more than strawberries in July; meat from Argentine will be as palatable as meat from Herefordshire.

The Americans have already improved on the bare idea. Shops fitted with the necessary storage cabinets are not only selling complete meals—"ready to thaw"—but they are also selling "quick-frozen" chickens ready trussed and stuffed, and steaks neatly trimmed.

SAINTS PRESERVE US!



SHORT SHORT STORY
COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

BY HEREWARD FYSON

Lopez was seated in the bottom of the boat, apparently quite happy. "Boss! When shall we reach land?"

WITH a nerve-shattering roar, the boilers of the old *Metzova* blew up, and she sank like a stone.

There was no warning at all. One moment Hartley was pacing the bridge, and the next he found himself struggling in the icy water. His heavy sea-boots were dragging him under, but he kicked out with all his strength and fought for his life.

He was a good swimmer, but his arms and legs soon lost their power, and the sea became a whirling nightmare of relentless foam pressing him down from the life-giving air. His strokes got more and more feeble, and it was not until he had begun to choke that the miracle happened which saved him.

He suddenly felt himself seized by the shoulders, lifted from the sea, and lowered into the bottom of a boat. A dark, grinning face was leering down on him.

"I just got you out in time, boss. I reckon you were about finished."

Hartley struggled to his feet, and stared in bewilderment at the grey, tumbling sea which had swallowed the *Metzova*. At last he turned slowly to his rescuer. He recognized the man as a cheerful, if untrustworthy, stoker; a Spanish American called Lopez.

"Anyone else get clear?" Hartley managed to ask, at last.

The other shook his head, his teeth still showing in a grin.

"No, boss. This boat broke away and I managed to scramble in. Lucky I was on deck when she blew up. All the rest of 'em went down with her."

Hartley roused himself with an effort, and as he wrung some of the water from his clothes, his mind began to grasp the stark reality of the situation. Instinctively he went straight to the provision locker, and after he had lifted the lid, his lips pursed in consternation.

It was empty!

Hurriedly Hartley went to the water breaker, and as he stared inside a feeling of horror came over him. That was empty, too.

His jaw stiffened, and he pulled himself upright.

"Do you know how to make sail?" he rapped out to Lopez.

The dark face grinned in assent, and they stepped the mast and soon had the boat bowling along under as much canvas as they dare clap on.

Hartley's mind was already made up. The only course open to him was to steer for Kratura, a little island far to the leeward. Whether they would ever reach it was another matter. The answer to that depended on his skill as a navigator.

He found himself looking forward to the ordeal with a grim feeling of excitement. He had always been proud of his skill in navigation, and now was his chance to prove his capabilities. The fact that there were no navigating instruments on board except a small compass only increased his determination to win through to safety.

He settled himself at the tiller and kept the boat heading west by the little compass.

"Boss!"

Lopez was seated in the bottom of the boat, apparently quite happy.

"When shall we reach land?"

Hartley thought for a moment, and glanced over the side to see how many knots the boat was making. Today was Wednesday. If they held the present speed day and night. . . .

"Early on Saturday," he said at last. "That's if the wind holds, of course."

Lopez's dark face grinned from ear to ear.

"We'll be all right, boss. There's no call to worry. Look here!"

He pointed to the oilskin bag hanging from his neck.

"It's a charm, boss. I bought it from a priest in Santos. He said it was St. Chr—Christopher, the saint that looks after sailors, and as long as I wore it, nothing could ever happen to me. And he was right, boss. That was seven years ago, and I'm still afloat."

Hartley gave a grunt of disbelief, but said nothing. It was better that the man should cling to his faith. It might help him to keep his reason.

At last, tired out and chilled to the bone, he handed the tiller to Lopez and lay down in the bottom of the boat.

"Don't forget," he cautioned. "Keep her dead west, and call me if anything happens."

Lopez nodded and crouched as far out of the wind as he could, his face close to the little compass.

Scarcely had Hartley shut his eyes, when he heard an agitated voice call out:

"Boss, boss, the wind's changing!"

Hartley, muttering a curse, scrambled to his feet and glanced at the compass. Sure enough the wind had swung nearly right round. Leaving Lopez at the tiller, he set to work on the sheets and soon had the boat heading west on her course again, sailing close-hauled into the rising gale.

For three days they kept the boat's bows pointing towards the west, and each day brought them greater hardship.

The weather was terrible; dark, grey clouds and strong winds chopping and changing their direction every few hours. During the whole time they never caught a glimpse of either the sun or the stars.

Hunger and the awful conditions under which they were existing began to take their toll, and they soon became so weak that it was a tremendous effort to manage the boat. Worse than this was the terrible craving for water, which racked their bodies day and night.

When Saturday morning dawned, cold and grey, Hartley stood up beside the mast. As he looked eagerly round, a dreadful feeling of bitter disappointment gripped him. Nothing! Except for the lifting castle of white-crested water, the horizon was bare and empty.

He had failed. Already the island must be behind them, beyond their sight over the sea rim. He must have blundered so far from the course that not even the tall, conical peak of Kratura had broken the horizon, and now, tortured by thirst, they were sailing without food or water into the vast, empty spaces of the ocean.

As night came, the wind fell to a dead calm, and he turned to Lopez in despair.

"We're done," he said, in a voice which was hoarse with thirst. "The sea's beaten us."

"We'll be all right, boss. There's no call to worry, not while I've got this with me."

He clutched his charm lovingly with both hands.

Some hours before dawn, when the sea was blotted out by the pit-like darkness, Hartley suddenly started up from the bottom of the boat where he had been lying. His ear had caught a faint, distant rumbling sound. Lopez, who had been sleeping over the tiller, was straining his eyes, staring into the darkness.

"It sounded like a gun, a mighty long way off."

Hartley nodded, and together they waited for the dawn. There was nothing else they could do.

Suddenly Lopez gave a cry.

"Boss, look! A ship!"

As a rusty, battered steamer slid out of the murk and turned towards them, Hartley stood athwart, cheering and shouting like a madman.

"Captain," he said, when, hours later, he had recovered sufficiently to join the master of the *Boston Star* on the bridge, "you were just in time. Serve me right if I lost my ticket missing Kratura like that. How far west are we of it now?"

The captain stared at him in surprise.

"West? Did you say west, mister? Where did your ship sink, did you say?"

Hartley told him the position, and the course they had steered since they had taken to the boat. The captain listened to him, his eyes wide open with astonishment.

"Mister," he said. "Let's get this straight. You see the chart here? Well, stick this pin in where your ship went down."

"Now," he went on after Hartley had obeyed. "We're on the way to Kratura ourselves, and I'm going to stick *my* pin in where we picked you up. I've been a master for twenty years, and I'll wager my ticket it's right to a mile."

And with that he stuck his pin so close to the other that they actually touched!

"That's impossible!" Hartley gasped. "We've been sailing west for four days, making good time, too, in spite of variable winds."

"Come on deck," said the captain of the *Boston Star*, and he led Hartley to their boat which had been hoisted on board.

He leaned over and looked at the little compass.

"H'm, near enough for right," he admitted.

Then he called to Lopez, who was scrounging cigarettes from the crew.

"Here, get inside this boat and take the tiller."

Lopez jumped in and crouched down instinctively over the compass.

"There!" cried the captain triumphantly. "I thought as much. Look at that, mister!"

Hartley gaped at the compass in bewilderment. It was swinging right round!

"He must be magnetic!" was all he could say.

"Magnetic be blowed! Give me that thing you've got slung round your neck, darkie."

Lopez reluctantly handed over his prized St. Christopher, and as he moved the compass dial swung back. The captain cut open the oilskin bag, and exultantly held up a metal plaque, embossed with the vague figure of a man carrying a child.

"Look, mister, it's made of iron! Why, don't you see, this thing's been swinging your compass round in circles, and you've been chasing after it like a merry-go-round. Lucky charm! Well, that's rich, four days sailing round in circles!"

He broke into a great guffaw of laughter. Suddenly his face straightened, and became solemn.

"And yet, mister, I guess that charm has saved you, after all. You expected to make Kratura on Saturday, didn't you? Well, we've had a message through on the radio that on Saturday night the volcano erupted and wiped out nearly all the islanders. It would have finished you, too, if you'd have been there. Maybe you heard the explosion?"

SON OF MAMA 'POSITO

There are times when aiding and abetting a deception is in such a good cause that even justice may enjoy the beauty of the joke

BY MAXWELL ALEY

ILLUSTRATED BY JACK GRANDFIELD

"You are my Tony! I knew it! Oh, Mother of God, my prayers have been answer' at las'!"

SERGEANT GRISWOLD had been sitting there alone before his desk in the Station Police Headquarters ever since the kid had left him, thinking back through tangled channels and seeing certain old and tragic happenings in the eye of his mind. He had been marvelling at a miracle of the spirit that Lisa Esposito had brought to pass by the sheer magic of belief.

Only he couldn't put it into those words. Words came sort of hard to Sergeant Griswold. He glowered at the tradesman's calendar above his desk and grumbled something about women sure bein' funny. After he had expressed that original idea he sighed and fell to work again on his weekly report.

Nothing went into it regarding the case of Mama 'Posito and the kid who had called himself Harry Horowitz. There was nothing to say about that in a report.

It was just a year since the unknown kid had turned up at the big tomato field that belonged to the canning company and asked the boss for a job. He had on a sporty blue suit with white stripes, and a city look. He was good-sized and strong without being too heavy, and had curly black hair and lazy, sultry dark eyes—pretty much the sheik. All the men sized him up as a bad egg right off, but the girls went back to the shed to powder their noses and fix up.

"What's your name?" the boss asked.

The kid hesitated a moment. "Harry Horowitz," he told him.

The boss looked at the kid and shook his head. "You don't look like no Horowitz to me," he announced.

"Well, I was adopted, see?" the kid explained glibly. "Out of an orphanage."

"There's your basket," said the boss, handing it to him. "Don't give me your personal story. Pick!"

It was half-way down the second row that he met Mama 'Posito coming up the other side. She straightened up to rest her back and saw him suddenly, his dark, curly head bent down over the vines—a boy who clicked all too perfectly with the picture she'd been building up for fifteen years.

And then: "What your name, boy? Tell me queek! It ain't Tony?"

"Why no, missus," he said, shaking his head. "It ain't Tony, though if that's what you'd like it to be, I'm sorry it ain't."

"Ah-h-h!" said Mama 'Posito, drinking in that smile of his. "Ah, you excuse, boy? You see, my leetle Tony, he'd be jus' like you, an' I think maybe——"

She had been thinking "maybe" for fifteen years every time she saw a dark-eyed boy with curly hair. Fifteen years being the time that had passed since little Tony Esposito had gone and got himself lost and never been found again.

Gaetano Esposito was alive then; six years before that, he and his young wife, Lisa, had come down into the tomato country, worked a place on shares, and finally saved enough to buy it.

When little Tony came along the second year, he looked very much like his father, a pretty fellow and mighty smart. Lisa and Tano idolized him, and they soon got the American idea that he could be anything, even if his papa and mama had started life as peasants in Italy. They worked still harder and put money by for his future.

He was five when they lost him, and it was like this: An excursion steamer ran on Saturdays, then, from Saterlee's Wharf over at Elysville, going down the river and across the bay to an amusement park. One hot July Saturday, the Espositos thought it would be fine to go for a day's outing and give little

(*please turn over*)

Tony some real American fun on the chutes and the merry-go-round and the other contrivances.

About half the countryside seemed to have had the same idea. Lisa and Tano became separated in the pushing and surging to get up the gangplank; and once on the boat, Lisa went rushing around the crowded decks hunting Tano, and he went rushing about hunting her, each very much excited. When they found each other at last, neither of them had little Tony.

"Tano!" Lisa cried. "Where's Tony?"

"He's on board," said Tano, confidently. "He'll be with some neighbour."

But Tony wasn't on the boat.

There wasn't anything to do but stay on her till she docked at the park. When they landed, Tano hired a fishing launch to take them back to Saterlee's dock; but little Tony wasn't there, either.

Tano and Lisa were frantic. They got hold of Sergeant Griswold, and Griswold started the search. No one about Saterlee's dock remembered seeing the child after the boat had left; but when it returned that evening, a woman who knew the Espositos claimed she'd seen little Tony with a tall, dark man.

Time went on, and there was no real news. Only one disappointing clue after another to raise poor Lisa's hopes.

Griswold dragged the river about the dock, and he kept watching farther down. It was three months later that he found the pitiful little body caught in the reeds of a lonely stretch of marsh creek. Secretly he sought out Gaetano, and together the two buried Tony in the dry sand beneath some scrub pines, taking their oath never for Lisa's sake, to tell anyone.

Gaetano, who had aged so fast, became really ill. The doctors at the hospital called it a fancy name and did everything they could for him, but by spring Lisa was a widow.

It was Griswold who stood by her; Griswold who brought her back to the lonely house where she had once been so happy with Gaetano and Tony. The two of them sat silently in the little parlour for a long time. Then at last Lisa began to talk.

"Mista Griswold," she said, "you have help me so. You mus' help me now to go on. I mus' go on because sometime my little Tony may come back to me."

And despite his tragic knowledge of the real truth, Griswold knew that he must never discourage that hope, that instead he must help to keep it alive.

Lisa did work hard, early and late doing the heavy labour of a man until she was in such a position that she could hire a helper. A dozen years slipped by. She grew stouter, older and people began generally to speak of her as "Mama 'Posito" because she was so kind, so maternal.

She didn't talk about that loss much now. Only to old friends, and infrequently. "Sometime yet," she would say, "my leetle Tony will come back. He could never forget his mama."

When she looked up that July morning and saw the Horowitz boy on the other side of the row of tomatoes, her heart gave a sudden and terrific jump. "Maybe——"

So she asked if his name were Tony and got her answer.

"I'm Harry Horowitz," said the boy on the other side of the tomato vines. "But I ain't Jewish. I was adopted out of an orphanage by a Jewish family. Rightly I'm Italian. I was only about five, I guess, when I lost my own folks."

"Five!" cried Mama 'Posito, as though she were afraid she hadn't heard aright. "Ah! And you remember your mama?"

"Well, you see," said Harry Horowitz, "it's a long time ago, but——" and his eyes looked flatteringly into Mama 'Posito's—"she must have been a lot like you."

"Ah-h-h," said Mama 'Posito, and smiled back at the boy. "You excuse an ol' woman?" she asked. "You see, I los' my leetle Tony when he's five—what you call keednap. Always I think maybe I find him. He'd be twenty year ol' now."

"That's funny," said the Horowitz boy. "I'm just twenty."

"When your birthday?" Mama 'Posito questioned eagerly. "June?"

"Why, how'd you know?" said the boy, ready to garner in anything the situation might offer.

"No matter," said Mama 'Posito, with a transparent assumption of canniness. Abruptly she changed the subject. "You new here?" she asked. "You jus' come?"

"This morning," said the boy.

"Where you stay?" she asked.

"Nowheres yet. I hear there's a shack for the pickin' gang."

"No, no, no!" Mama 'Posito exploded. "You are too nice-a boy. That shack dirty, hot—an' the food! You come home with me. I live jus' one mile an' I got my ol' car outside. So you come, hey?" She leaned forward. "I give you good room, good bed, good spaghett' jus' like I'm your mama!"

"That'd be swell," said the boy a bit awkwardly, "but——"

"But you 'fraid I charge you beeg price? No, no, no. I charge you——" she was going to say "Nothing at all," but she realized that would seem strange—"I charge you jus' what they do at the gang shack," she told him. "You come, hey?"

"I'll say so!" said that kid, though his eyes had hardened with a moment's cold appraisal as he wondered what the old girl's game might be. Probably just a bit cracked over having lost her own kid.

So, when the day finished, the kid climbed into the flivver with Mama 'Posito, and she took him home with her to the little white frame house.

That evening Griswold, having heard that Mama 'Posito had taken in a boy from the picking-gang, came up to see what it was all about. When she came to the screen door to let him in, her eyes had a look in them he hadn't seen since Tony's disappearance.

"Ah, Mist' Griswold!" she greeted him. "Come in!"

"Lisa," said Griswold, coming right to the point, "who's this boy you've taken in? Where is he?'

Lisa admitted that he'd gone out. It seemed that he'd picked up a girl in the tomato field that afternoon and gone off with her to the movies in Mama 'Posito's old flivver.

"Lisa," said Griswold, "now mind what I say and go easy. Of course I haven't seen the kid, but until I have a chance to question him, go easy. You don't know what he might be. I don't want you in for a bad time with some escapin' crook from the big city."

"Hah! Crook?" cried Mama 'Posito, banging down a saucepan on the table. "Thata boy crook? Hah, you make me laugh! You crazy! Thata boy with the eyes and the hair of my Tano, and the birthday of my Tony? Don't you get fresh with me! No, not if you are my ol' frien'!"

Griswold decided he'd better humour her. After all, if the boy could bring balm to the ache of her old wound, why not? But he left resolved to give the kid a grilling the next day.

Around eleven the boy came home. It seemed that the girl hadn't made such a hit as she might. He'd left her early and stopped at a poolroom in the village, where he'd collected some valuable information quite unintentionally. One of the loafers there had said: "I hear you're stayin' with ol' Mom 'Posito," and an older man had volunteered the details of little Tony's disappearance.

This gave the Horowitz boy an idea. The old girl was pretty soft, but she was treating him swell. And if he played his cards right. . . . Anyhow, her place was a good, safe hide-out.

Mama 'Posito was waiting up for him and darning a pair of his socks. A pitcher of red wine was on the table, and some home-baked bread and jam, and some little cakes. The sight gave the kid a funny feeling. It was—well, nice somehow, to come home to all that.

"Gee, mama," he told her, "you don't know how nice it is to come back here to you." And in saying that he was quite honest. It was. "I dreamed all my life," he went on, "what it'd be to have somebody like you waitin' for me."

"Boy," she said, "tell me. What you remember about your own folks?"

Well, he remembered quite a lot, and his memory had been vastly stimulated by the things he had heard at the poolroom. "You see," he said, "I was just a kid of five, and it ain't so clear. But there was an excursion boat and a big crowd, and

a tall, dark man." Mama 'Posito drew in her breath with a sharp sound.

"Said he'd help me find 'em. But he didn't. He took me off with him instead and we went a long way in a train, and we got to a city, and then I don't seem to remember much in between that and being at the orphanage."

Mama 'Posito rose slowly to her feet, her hands clutching at the table edge for support. Twice she tried to speak, but no sound came. Sobbing, her breath coming in hard catches, she buried her head against his shoulder: and one hand fumbled for his, found it, held it convulsively. "Tony!" she cried hoarsely, looking up into his face. "You are my Tony! I knew it! Oh, Mother of God, my prayers have been answer' at las'!"

Sergeant Griswold didn't get to question the Horowitz boy the next day, for there was trouble at the bottle works in Elysville, and he had to drive over there early in the morning. And he was needed there two days.

When he got back, it was late Saturday afternoon, and the first people he met told him the big news.

"You know that new kid that turned up in the pickin'-gang, Hurrywits? Well, he's Mama 'Posito's long-lost Tony! Leastways she thinks he is, and she's givin' a big party tonight to celebrate."

Griswold could have bit himself he was so mad. Instead he stepped on the gas. When he reached the Esposito farm he saw the Horowitz boy sitting on the porch looking like the picture of a movie actor at home. He had on white flannel trousers, white shoes with tan tips and straps, blue coat, pale blue silk shirt and a striped tie. On the porch was a lot of new reed furniture and Japanese lanterns were hung up for the party.

The kid never batted an eyelash as Griswold stamped up the walk though the sight of a state policeman's uniform couldn't have given him any pleasure.

"Good evening, sergeant," he said, getting up and offering his hand. "Mama's told me all about you, so's I feel as though we knew each other already. Won't you sit down and have a smoke? Mama's busy in the kitchen gettin' ready for a party."

The nerve of the kid! Griswold ignored the outstretched hand, but he did come up on the porch and sit down. He took the cigar the kid gave him, and the proffered light. He needed soothing. And all the time he was taking the kid in, and his eyes were just as soft as a pair of agate marbles.

"Fine weather," said the kid, looking out at the cloudless blue sky. "Me and mama was afraid it might rain and spoil the party."

"I don't think you need worry about *rain* spoilin' it," said Griswold ominously.

"No?" the kid asked, his eyes narrowing.

"Look here," said Griswold, "do you think I believe any of this stuff about you bein' the long-lost Tony Esposito?"

"Well," said the kid, "why not?"

"Yeah?" said Griswold, in a nasty tone. What'ye think I am, a state policeman or a fool?"

"A state policeman," said the boy promptly.

"And d'ye think I'm not on to you?"

"I'm damn sure you're on, if you want the truth."

"Now," said Griswold, "we're getting somewhere. All right! Listen to me!" The way he barked his words at the kid showed the suppressed fury back of them. "Lisa Esposito is my friend. I went through Tony's loss with her. I knew Tano, her husband, and he was my friend, too. I was with her when he died. Now, get this straight: if you do one thing to hurt Lisa Esposito, I'll drill you full of lead if I get the chair for it. Only I won't, as you damn well know. I'll have got your record and have come to arrest you, and you'll have resisted, see?"

The kid's lips had drawn into a line and his eyes were like little points of black fire.

"O.K.," he said. "I get you. Now listen to me! I got a record, but not a very bad one. And I started out on this to get what I could out of it because I seen the old dame was soft about me.

"But part of what I told mama is the truth. I was brought up in an orphanage in Philadelphia, and I didn't know who my folks is. Well, see? I fell into this thing, and I didn't make the first move neither, see? She started it. But I been square with mama except for what I told her about the boat and the tall, dark man."

"Been square!" Griswold said, sarcastically. "You dirty little skunk!"

"No," the boy said, "you're wrong on that. Maybe I was a dirty little skunk at first, but, sergeant, mama *believes* I'm Tony, now. I——" He spread his hands and looked at Griswold helplessly. "Don't you understand?" he said. "I wouldn't hurt mama now for anything."

They were silent for a moment, Griswold searching the boy's eyes. "All right," he said at last. "I'll make a bargain with you. Come clean, and I'll let things ride."

The boy bit his upper lip. When he spoke, it was jerkily. He said: "I guess you're the kind of guy I can trust. What I'm tellin' you is true. I was brought up in an orphanage in Philadelphia, like I said. I don't remember much about before, except a man beat me once. I am Italian, real name Pete Burelli. When I was fourteen, I run off to New York. Got a job as an errand boy in a Bronx grocery store run by people named Horowitz. I said my name was Harry. Everybody called me Harry Horowitz. I kept straight, see, till last year. Another kid I knew got me in with the Gaspari gang, and we made some easy money."

"What you wanted for now?"

"For nothin' I done; just for what I can tell."

"You never croaked anyone?"

"God, no! One reason I run off was I was scared I'd get into a job and would have to. Gaspari put me on a hold-up he was plannin' and I, well, I didn't want to do it, so I beat it across the ferry and kept travellin' till I hit this town. Funny thing is, Gaspari got caught. The cops was on and nailed him. On that very job. And they began roundin' up his mob. Well, I seen all this in the papers after I left, and I made up my mind to lay low."

"What sort of jobs did you pull?"

"Small ones. Couple of chain-store robberies."

"Get caught?"

"Once."

"The Island?"

"First offender. Three months."

"All right," said Griswold. "If I'd been here day before yesterday, this'd never happened. But I wasn't, an' it did. So I'm takin' your word. If you break it——"

"I get you."

There was a clatter in the hall, and Mama 'Posito came bursting out the door.

"Ah, my Tony!" said Mama 'Posito. "And Mist' Griswold! So glad I am to see you at las', my ol' fren'! I want to tell you I am a happy woman. Only the Blessed Virgin can know how much happiness is mine, for like Her, I have los' my son, an' I have found him again." She drew the boy's face down and kissed it.

Griswold smiled, the coldness thawing out of his eyes. "Lisa," he said, "it's fine to see you so happy. Only thing is, you an' the kid have gone too fast. After all, you don't *know* he's Tony, an' he don't know it neither."

"Hah!" said Mama 'Posito, "you are not my fren' when you come trying to spoil things for me!"

"Lisa!" Griswold said. "Surely you know after all these years that I'm your friend. Be reasonable, that's all. Don't do nothin' you might be sorry for, see? Now about this party——"

"I have ask' all my fren's to come, my ol' fren's who knew my Tano and my Tony," said Mama 'Posito with dignity. "I have tol' them that my Tony has come back, an' that again we have a party like in the days when Tano was alive."

"H'm," said Griswold. "Since you've gone as far's you have, the party'll have to go on, I s'pose. But just to check up, I'm going to run down the records of that Philadelphia orphanage."

The community was buzzing with gossip, Griswold found. Opinion as to the long-lost boy ranged from cynical scepticism through hilarious joking to full acceptance. When asked about his own belief, Griswold's reply was not entirely frank.

"Remember Tano," he said. "This kid does look like him; you can't get away from that."

Those whose memories went back fifteen years agreed.

"Anyhow," he went on, "whether he's Tony or not, after all the trouble Lisa's had we've got to stand by her and kid her along. You don't need to worry about the boy; he'll treat Lisa square. I'm dead sure of that."

That evening at the party, when Mama 'Posito and Harry Horowitz stood side by side, the guests were quite ready to concede the boy's claim. He and Lisa were a handsome pair in their dark, flashing, foreign way, and there was enough of the same racial heritage in their veins to make their relationship seem plausible. Their manner with each other, too; Mama 'Posito proud and maternal, and the boy treating her just like all the mothers present wished their own sons might.

(*please turn to page* 38)

Griswold would have given a good deal to escape that party, but he knew he must be seen there after what he'd said

Follow their lead!

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If STANLEY HOLLOWAY offered you a cigarette it would be a **De Reszke**-of course!

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THE DEVIL COMES ABOARD

BY DOUGLAS NEWTON

ILLUSTRATED BY A. C. MICHAEL

"The woman goes to the Thing" she cried, with icy passion. "The very well-being of our land depends on it"

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY

SAVARAN, that lean, eagle-eyed adventurer, the Whip of Kings and the Fear of Rogues, has come to Kjweli, disguised as a beggar, to settle an old account with the magistrate,

KADI JIBLIS EL SIFR, merchant in money, intrigue, arms, slaves, drugs and such assorted dirt. He nears the magistrate's house just in time to rescue from a mob of natives,

MIRIAM PASTON, a beautiful, courageous, English girl who is with her brother,

TERRY PASTON, young, public school, and very innocent of the way of rogues, and their friend and fellow-traveller,

CAPTAIN EUAN AMORY. The three of them are in Kjweli to fit out an expedition to find the lost city of Myssr where is hidden great wealth. Savaran pursues one of the natives to recover Miriam's stolen bag and finds in it a map revealing the route of the expedition. He makes his way back to El Sifr's house to restore the bag, but the magistrate is prepared, and has him arrested and flung into jail. Learning that the girl and her companions are sailing the next morning, Savaran escapes and boards the ship. He lies in hiding until during a storm the crew revolt and then he comes to the rescue, El Sifr and the ship's captain escaping with full details of the proposed journey.

Under Savaran's generalship they set off into the Great Sand but after many days of driving across the trackless desert wastes, under the burning, tropical sun, Miriam decides to give the whole thing up and return to the coast. However, during the night they are captured by an army of Amazons and taken into the city of Myssr where, subsequently brought before the queen, Savaran makes a desperate attempt to save their lives.

"YOU—and the queen will be the first to die under your arrows, old hag," Savaran mocked her. "And it is not meet, O Khadra, flower of women, that you should be massacred for an old harridan's ravings."

The queen, who had stiffened under the high priestess's cries, melted again at his scoffing contempt for the sibyl.

"Stay your hands!" her voice rang out. "Let no one stir unless the queen commands."

The Amazons of the guard became rigid in obedience, only the high priestess continued to rend the silence with her angry ravings: "Death! They who break the law must die! Kill! Kill! Even the highest may not dare the law."

The girl looked at Savaran, half-frightened, half-rebellious.

"What do I do?" she cried. "Ngala has power."

"Not above a queen who *is* a queen," he said. "Be one. I, who have been king, know the worth of boldness. Order her out of the chamber."

The queen's eyes sparkled under this spur to power. She stood up, a superb and compelling figure, whose raised arm brought stillness and silence among the shuffling throng.

"The queen commands," she cried. "All will leave the Presence now. All! The prisoners will be kept in security until I, the queen, decide their fate. Go—I have said it."

The officers sprang to movement. The Amazons clanked to action, driving the crowd out, escorting their captives. Only Ngala, the high priestess, dark with rage, remained, her eyes vengeful with hate. The queen shivered as she glanced from her to Savaran.

"The queen said *all*," the lean adventurer said softly, his fierce eyes matching and mastering the priestess's. "All! And *I* am now the right hand of the queen's obedience."

He lifted the great axe so that its wicked blade lay on his left palm. The high priestess mowed at him, met the ruthless hardness of his eye, turned, and with a terrible gesture, hurried away.

"She is angered!" the queen said edgily. "She is powerful—I fear."

"That old baggage—what is she beside Savaran?" he said, genially. "Take heart, sweeting, Savaran is here, and fear ceases for those in the shelter of his arm."

"You talk, you look like a god," she whispered. "Yet how——"

"How?" he grinned largely, and dropped on to the sacred king bench beside her. "First come into the shelter of Savaran's arm, and I will demonstrate how. . . ."

In the vast chamber, on the very throne of royalty, with a queen on his knees, Savaran could not resist being Savaran.

The conqueror spirit had triumphed again. The power that gave him so strange a mastery over women as well as warriors had once more turned defeat into victory and more than victory. His keen, bird head went back in a laugh—he was a king once more.

The queen, Khadra, stirred within his arms at his laugh. Her young fear, reawakening, drove back the easy passion of exotic blood that had made her surrender to this strange, compelling creature so swiftly. She thrust him away, sprang up, crying that this was the profanation of profanations. This was death.

"What is death beside the favours of such beauty?" the adventurer asked in his large way.

"But is *my* death!" she wailed. "Queens may not love."

"From my memory of history that has made little difference," he grinned. "Most queens, it seems, have also been women."

"But not I," she cried, her fist hammering the royal bench. "Our queen must be above all mating, even with the serf-males, which is allowed others of our women. Mere contact with man means death for her—for me. That is the law."

"Laws," he said easily, "can be broken by the strong——"

"Not this; Ngala, the high priestess, who enforces the law, will see to it."

"——Or got round," he said with splendid indifference. "I, who have made laws, tell you this."

"But how—how?" she moaned.

"You will probably find something in the constitution that exactly fits your case. There always is—if you are clever and powerful enough to enforce it."

She was calmed a little by his superman effrontery; he could almost see her quick and simple mind trying to remember things that might save her pretty neck. Yet fear of the priestess was too deep-rooted in her harsh and savage nature to be easily defied. Ngala, who alone interpreted the laws and traditions of Myssr, had put her on the throne and could sweep her off it. Ngala had only to threaten the vengeance of the gods and the whole nation would support her in fear.

"Give me back my men and arms and I will end the power of Ngala and her gods," he told her.

"The gods!" she shivered at his impiety, even though a gleam of hope crept into her eyes. "Even the Thing; that will claim me."

"The Thing—or any other man or monster who dares claim one so peerless from *me*, Savaran," he cried, seeing his chance.

She told him of the Thing, fear and hope and admiration warring in her quick face. The Thing was the Beast, the Water God that dwelt in the great tanks of the dark cliff temple, protecting the hoard of ancient gold and taking tribute because of the curse that gold had brought upon Myssr.

She could not describe the nature of this Thing. It was a huge, mysterious and loathsome monster, who had existed from time beyond knowledge. All she knew was that it was fearsome, and especially to her, since it had to be constantly propitiated by the sacrifice of living virgins.

That was why she, the queen, could never mate. Like all other queens before her, she had been chosen by the high priestess as the loveliest maiden of her time not only to be queen, but to be the destined offering to the Thing. She would enjoy the sweets of power for a few years only, for when she was thirty and her beauty, as was the way with Myssr women, began to dim, she would be taken in solemn procession to the cliff temple and cast alive into the tank where the Thing awaited her.

This sacrifice was linked with the wicked queen who had brought the disaster of the sand upon them by refusing to cast away her gold and jewels. That queen had been thirty when the vengeance of the gods had overtaken her, and she was the first to be flung to the Thing in the tank.

Savaran, knowing how powerful and unbreakable such traditions could be among primitive peoples, yet said magnificently:

"It is a monstrous crime. It is time it was ended, anyhow——"

"It can never end," she said. "It must go on unbroken until——" Abruptly she was sitting up staring at him with wide eyes of wonder. "Zavarani—are you the Destined One?"

"It sounds like me," he blinked. "Tell me more about—me."

"It is a legend, a promise," she cried eagerly, clutching two-handed at hope. "It is written on our sacred scrolls that in the day of our greatest extremity, when the curse of gold has reached its height and our nation seems dying—as, indeed, it is now—there will come out of the unknown, a great king, a warrior unsurpassable in war, mighty in wisdom, godlike in bearing——"

"It is undoubtedly a prophecy of Savaran," he said with gusto.

"Yea," she breathed. "I had not guessed, but—you are indeed the Lord and Wonder of men. . . ."

"I can go even farther than that, myself," he grinned. "—the Destined One——"

"And he will win the queen of his day who will be the loveliest maiden ever chosen for our throne——"

"That," the bizarre man said, kissing her hand, "makes it definite."

"Mating together," she cried, beaming on him, "they will destroy the curse, restore our people to strength and power and bring back its lost glory to our city Myssr."

"I've never heard a neater revelation of me," he said, without a qualm of doubt. "I have never doubted my destiny of greatness."

"It is *you*—you are sure?" she demanded, nervously.

"It would be impiety to doubt it," he said, spaciously. "Have I not come strangely, mysteriously out of the unknown? Am I not all these—er—other things you mentioned? Am I as ordinary men?"

"Nay," she breathed. "You are a lion, an eagle. Your very glance is the sword of power."

"Quite. And are you not the loveliest of all Myssr's queens?"

"Ah—but it does seem too wonderful to be true. . . . And are you truly a king, Zavarani?"

"Truly—and often," he said superbly. "I have been an emperor, even—for a week. And then, you feel destiny in me yourself? Why else did you forget all vows and break all laws at the sight of me? It was because your instinct knew me at once as the Destined One."

"Yes! Yes, I do feel it is so. If only

(*please turn to page* 25).

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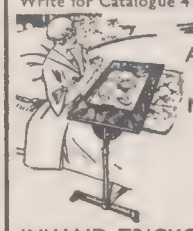

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Ngala, the high priestess, will see it, too."

"Ngala, the priestess, will see," he said grimly. "Come, sit with me on *our* throne again. Call one of your officers and bid her bring at once the small, dark, hand weapons that were taken from me." He described his formidable pistols. "Then, when they are brought, summon those officers you can trust—only those, and when they are about you, call Ngala to you. If I know priestesses she will listen—for there is always the Thing!"

Savaran was a king once more.

Ngala, the high priestess, listened. There was hate in her eyes but cunning, too. She glanced about her at the queen's chosen officers and knew there was no mercy for herself save that which her wits could win. She stared at the raking and formidable man who was already a power on the throne because of the infatuation of the pretty, brainless chit she, herself, had made, and knew that her peril lay in him.

Wise from long experience, Ngala, the priestess, veiled the rage in her soul and played for time. She had all the tricks in her hand there. While pretending to accept Savaran as the Destined One, she declared that nothing could be done officially until she had consulted deeply —and long—the passages in the Sacred Rolls relating to his coming.

Savaran smiled with sardonic blandness and suggested that an even surer test for doubters would be the Thing, itself. In other words that she, Ngala, should be cast into the devilish tank into which her will had flung so many, leaving it to the Beast to spare her if the gods supported her point of view, or devour her if they did not.

Ngala knew the Thing too well to see any hope in that. Furious at the cunning of this adventurer who could be as ruthless as herself, wrung by her dread of the Beast, her memory marvellously revived. She recalled the prophecy of the Destined One so precisely that she no longer doubted that Savaran was indubitably he.

Indeed, when the trumpets rang out and the Amazons and populace flocked in to gaze astounded at a king as well as a queen on the high royal bench, Ngala took the lead in proclaiming the good news. She did it so fervently that she actually robbed Savaran of his gesture. It was she, the high priestess of Myssr, who had actually brought about this wonder that was to be the saving of the people.

Khadra, the queen, rejoiced in this rejoicing, seeing Ngala, the priestess, as their ally. Savaran, more experienced in the goodwill of the wily, was not so happy. The old hag had adroitly won the queen as well as the people. She was in a strong position to make trouble, and trouble was her life's work.

She proved it at once. With the uttermost sweetness she proclaimed that Savaran, being the Deliverer, she, through her hieratic office, declared that he must be acclaimed and crowned as such with full traditional ceremonial. This ceremonial, together with his marriage to the queen, would take place on the sacred day of the full moon—in three days' time.

Savaran's smile glimmered dry and fierce at the delight of the populace, the council *and* the queen at such quick action. He knew better. The old harridan had out-manœuvred him. She had made sure, even with the doting queen, that he, Savaran, should remain without any real power for those three critical days. For the council, and especially the queen, would think his demand for earlier power suspicious.

He was forced to smile acceptance, trusting that his domination over the girl would gain him all he needed—but having so cleverly established her legal position, Ngala meant to make the most of it.

There was the little matter of the Destined One's followers—now prisoners. The law and tradition of Myssr was quite plain as to what their fate should normally be. As the queen, herself, had publicly proclaimed, one man in two should be slain, the rest used as slaves. . . . Savaran with a sharp word of warning got the queen on his side there. She intervened. She declared that the Destined One's personal followers, naturally came under the same law as himself, and should be freed so that with him they might aid the restoration of Myssr.

"Now try Brentford and Sunderland"

Ngala, the cunning, had angled for just that. She was all sympathy. She agreed, or was willing to, if she could be certain of the favour of the gods. She skilfully stirred up doubts and fears that set the council in anxious debate, and when there seemed no way out, herself solved the difficulty by ruling that they, like Savaran, should be incorporated in the nation. That is, they should be initiated and accepted with him at his coronation ceremonies—in three days' time.

The queen sent a glance of triumph towards the eagle face. Her wonder man had won his point, they had defeated Ngala's attempt to rob them of a trusty bodyguard. Savaran smiled back with bitter gusto—he knew they hadn't. The high priestess had made certain that his men would remain prisoners and unarmed for three days.

In Miriam Paston's case there was nearly disaster. Ngala had no doubt in her mind what must happen to her—and she knew that the queen would support her. Law and tradition ordained that this strange woman *must* be cast to the Thing on the day of the full moon. The sacrifice would form the natural prelude to the coronation festivities.

Ngala did not even have to argue this —she simply left it to the queen. At Savaran's objection, the cold and pitiless beauty took fire with an implacable, primitive jealousy. Savaran had arrived with this girl, so there might be something between them—she would not brook a rival.

"The woman goes to the Thing," she cried, with icy passion. "The very well-being of our land depends on it." And as Savaran tried smoothness—"Is this woman anything to you that you seek to protect her? Is she before the queen in your eyes?"

Savaran was too old in the ways of women to make matters worse by insisting. But under the disarming smile he gave the queen, he knew he was facing a crisis such as even Savaran had not faced before. Ngala, the high priestess, had tied his hands through the queen, who was determined that Miriam Paston should die.

Ngala, the priestess, had done her work well. Even in his arms Khadra was suspicious of any approach to the subject, however diplomatically he suggested it. Thrusting back from his embrace, her face as hard and as cruel as a Fury's, she demanded:

"Why do you ask again and again for your men to be free at once and their arms given them? Is it the gold?"

"Gold! What is gold when I have more than that in my arms?" he laughed —for that at least was true, for she was conquest and power as well as the gold. But the truth in his voice stung her more.

"It is the woman then?"

"Indeed it is *the* woman," he did not hesitate to say. "The woman of women, Khadra, the queen. It is her sure safety I want."

"Her safety—in her own land, among her own people, who at this very moment rejoice and prepare to do her supreme honour? Where is danger there?"

"Not there, but in this palace, in the temple."

"Ngala, the priestess? Is Zavarani afraid of her?"

"Not afraid, but aware of her cunning."

"But she is on our side. It was she who made all things right for us."

"In three days' time. Much can happen in three days."

"What can?" she pouted, then her eyes narrowed harshly. "Though that woman might be rescued by your armed men in that time."

There is no arguing with even better women when jealousy is rampant, while the primitive savagery of this girl made her the deadliest of her species. Only to think of Miriam Paston made her determined on her death. She even gloated openly on her unique power of deposing her rival.

Savaran could do nothing but wait upon his chance. He did not make things happier by visiting the prisoners, but he had to do it. There was no one in this city of women he could trust—yet; and he had to warn at least Euan Amory and Terry what was going to happen.

The prison was a building near the palace. Like it, it was hewn out of the solid rock of the cliff. It was strong, well guarded, simple. A doorless arch led into a broad passage where stalwart Amazons, obviously hand picked by Ngala, stood sentinel and also filled a big guard room to the left. Their presence, their veiled hostility and the smirking contempt of their eyes told him how far the priestess had already worked for his undoing.

More satisfactory were the bad manners of the goddess-built flapper commanding the guard. She deliberately kept him waiting in the officers' quarters to the right of the passage. He never enjoyed insults better. He was able to note that every rifle and pistol taken from his men were set out with spinsterish neatness on the wall shelves. Even the boxes of cartridges and the half-case of grenades that remained to them were prettily stacked beneath.

Better still, the frozen virgin was so preoccupied with affronting him that it never occurred to her that eyes as keen as his would note the exact position of the niche near the door from which she took the big jail key. With becoming meekness he followed her—chuckling in his soul—to where, at the end of the passage, there was one of the few doors in Myssr closed with something stronger than hanging draperies or skins.

It was a massive structure of thick wood and iron bands, yet simple again, for it was secured only by one stout wooden bar and the bolt of its massy, antique lock. This, it is true, gave trouble to the Amazon's wrists, but Savaran put his arm about her waist, drew her aside and with one twist of his sinewy fingers shot the monster bolt. The very hearty squeeze he gave the embattled lady as he passed on into the prison, left her in a rich confusion of emotions, not all military.

His reception from the Pastons and his men was also mixed.

The seamen of the *Allah-Din* hailed him as a deliverer, until they learnt that their day of freedom was postponed, when they denounced him with equal fervour as a treacherous, double-crossing jackal.

The Paston group plainly held the same sentiments. Terry was blurtingly abusive; Euan Amory very cavalry and distant—Miriam turned her lovely back on him in frigid disgust. His methods with Khadra, the queen, had not gone unnoted.

"In other words," Euan Amory said, distantly, when he had finished his say, "we depend for our lives solely on *your* being able to find a way to defeat this treachery."

"No, you count on it," the bizarre man said, largely. "Savaran always finds a way."

"To feather his own nest, yes," Terry burst in. "You've seen your chance to grab everything through that pretty-faced Jezebel. You're playing your own dirty game—as El Sifr warned us."

"Terry," Miriam said coldly, "don't bandy words with the man."

"No, by jove," Terry stormed. "He's not worth decent words, but, by heavens, if I could only meet you on equal terms, you crook; if I only had a weapon now I'd shoot you like the preying beast you are."

"Ah, a weapon," Savaran said with fierce savour. "Here's one."

From the sleeve of his robe he slid one of the two pistols the queen had restored and put it into the angry boy's hand.

Taken utterly aback, Terry gaped at the weapon, glared at the scoffing face, looked wildly round for support. Even Euan Amory and Miriam were struck dumb by that truly Savaran recklessness.

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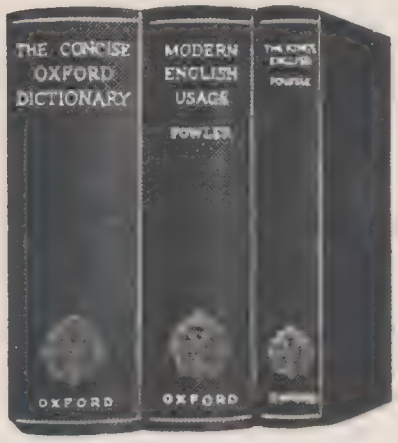

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"Well, my Galahad, why don't you rid the world of its most illustrious crook? No, the old school tie forbids. Well, hide that gun quick." Savaran's tone changed from mockery to grimness. "It may be vital in a crisis—and you have your sister to think of. Good-bye, until Savaran makes good his promises."

"Savaran!" Miriam cried in a breaking voice.

But Savaran never spoilt an exit. He stalked through the door like a misunderstood emperor, leaving them to wonder how much they had wronged him.

He wondered rather a lot himself.

The days passed swiftly, and so cunning was the high priestess that even Savaran could see no way of making good his boasts. The feminine intriguing of Ngala was so clever that even though he was aware of it through scores of contemptuous insults, there was nothing he could act on. Above all, the crude yet consuming jealousy of the queen fettered him always.

The day before the full moon he learnt that Miriam Paston had been taken from the common prison to the separate cell where the virgins doomed to be sacrificed to the Thing were always lodged. Terry, it seemed, had been wise enough not to resist with his pistol, perhaps Euan Amory had persuaded him. Yet as the day went on and no opportunity for saving her presented itself, Savaran had a wild fancy of marching boldly into the prison, holding up the guards with his remaining pistol and releasing and arming his men.

But he hesitated. It would mean angering the queen, precipitating a crisis that Ngala, the priestess, was waiting to exploit—and the end of all his hopes of gold and empire. Not for the first time Savaran found himself torn between ambition and a woman, but never so dangerously as this.

The day of the full moon came in a blaze of harsh sunlight. From before dawn Savaran saw that he was being more closely watched and guarded than ever. The most resolute Amazons of the spear-guard occupied the rooms and passages of the palace. They seemed to mass about him, watching him like cats. He was more than ever aware of the mockery in the sly smiles of the officers.

The glittering procession to the dark cliff temple formed up in the great square before the palace. He noted that few of the populace were there, they were massed farther along the straight black road near the temple itself, as though they knew they would enjoy a richer, rarer spectacle in the temple. Yet as he came out of the palace, glitteringly robed as a king beside the dazzling queen, there arose even from those few, cries that were more of derision and hate than acclaim.

He saw a startled look leap to Khadra's eyes. He saw fear growing in her lovely face as she heard. Not that that helped—now. The chosen spearwomen of the royal guard were thick about them, there was no hope of escape.

"Zavarani," she whispered, huskily, as the procession began to move. "Did you hear? They shout death—for *us*!"

"It is too late to hear—or fear," he told her, calmly. "Walk with a queen's pride and pray that Savaran may find his chance."

He walked with the unconcern of an untamed lion himself. None could tell from his high, fierce smile, or the arrogance of his bearing, that even he was asking what Savaran could do. Amazons of the spear and bow hedged them like a wall. Priestesses with flaming torches and swinging censers were everywhere, leading the procession, closing in round them in a fanatic mass.

At their very backs walked Ngala, the high priestess, her face flaming with elated hate, the wild, high voice of her chanting made it plain that this was her moment of triumph. With her strutted the new executioner, a man as powerful as the one Savaran had overthrown, but younger and more agile—and very much more alert. He carried the great half-moon axe on his shoulder, and the wicked glint in his eyes as they rested on Savaran, proclaimed how eager he was to use it, and on whom.

The chanting, glittering procession moved steadily along the broad, black way of death, the populace closing in and crowding after. They came to the temple, dark and towering under the cliff. The trumpets blew and the great gates closing the lower half of the pillars clanged open.

They passed through the pillared porch into a nave so gigantic that it was almost an arena. Platforms were stepped up each side of it, so that the priestesses and troops taking part in the ceremonial should see everything. There were balustraded galleries all round into which the public hungrily poured.

Nearly all the floor was given up to a great tank, like a giant's swimming pool, for here and there a flight of stone steps went down into it. It went out of sight in a carven tunnel stretching deep into the cliff. The water had a dark, greasy, scummy look, and there came from it a whiff that made Savaran's hooked nostrils twitch and his hand reach for the pistol in the sleeve of his robe; yet no ripple disturbed the sleek, evil darkness of that water—yet.

Again the arrangements of windows let in tremendous beams of light. They played on the pool and concentrated particularly on two points. One was the royal dais at the very edge of the tank, and the royal bench on which they took their seats; the high priestess and executioner standing behind them. The other lit up a dazzling cage that was built out of the water, near-by. It was a strange cage. Its bars and floor were pure gold and in it stood Miriam Paston.

Savaran's smile grew tight and dangerous as he saw her. Her clothes had been taken from her and she was clad in a tenuous version of the local costume, only she was bound, ankles and wrists, with cords.

Trumpets blared again. Silence fell upon the multitude. Priestesses carrying a golden tray on which was piled a mass of flesh moved to the edge of the pool. The High Priestess led a wild, mad chant, and at the top of her scream took the meat and cast it far into the tank.

At once there came a great swirling of the dark waters from the depths under the cliff, it surged and burst apart in a white fury, as a vile head hurled itself into sight. A great cry of awe arose: "The Thing! He! The Beast!"

Savaran, on the royal bench, braced himself for swift action, and even his face stiffened in anxiety and disgust. The Thing was the largest crocodile he had ever seen—and the foulest.

The mighty head and wicked jaws of the brute were as vast and unsightly as some prehistoric monster. Perhaps it was prehistoric, the father of all saurians, for it had a look of infinite and unseemly age, as though it had been trapped and imprisoned here for centuries. Its pallid, slug-like flaccidity, its gross and bulging hugeness, and the slimy fungus about it, made it the most obscene thing Savaran had ever looked upon.

The foul thing hurled itself at the meat, its eyes malignantly alert. Savaran's pistol half out to shoot, was checked by the shaking touch of Khadra, the queen.

"Not yet," she muttered in a terrified voice. "It will come again."

Suspecting that the girl, though terrified at the sight of what was to be her own fate, was also willing in her jealousy to let Miriam Paston be sacrificed first, Savaran sat with every nerve keyed for instant action. But Khadra was right. The great jaws snapped horridly on the meat and, with a swirl, the monster sank from view.

An amazing ritual began and a strange one. From ledges hidden under the water, and by some secret method Savaran was not then able to fathom (though he noted no use was made of the steps), priestesses drew into sight from under the water, one after one, the emblems of royalty. There was a tall, barbaric crown of pure gold encrusted with precious stones; orbs of state, staffs and the rest; an outstanding collection worth a king's ransom.

All these were taken from the water, were dried and polished by the priestesses and then carried to the golden cage. There, no doubt in symbolic memory of the evil queen, they were placed by Ngala on the head and body of Miriam Paston—a bitter touch of irony. This was the gold she had come to find; it was to mock her death.

Savaran following every movement lynx-eyed, noted many things. One was that before Ngala trusted her person to the floor of the cage, which was obviously meant to drop downward, satellite priestesses made sure that both it and the lever that manipulated it from the outside were secure.

Again, as the queenly jewellery was set upon Miriam Paston's head and person, each piece was securely attached by a strong chain to the cage. Thus, when the moment came for the bottom of the cage to be released so that her body should be projected into the water, the regalia of royalty would be left behind, safe from the devouring Beast.

That Beast, trained through centuries of sacrifices, made no attempt to snap at the priestesses as they lifted out the jewels, and indeed gave no sign of life until Miriam was completely decked out as a queen.

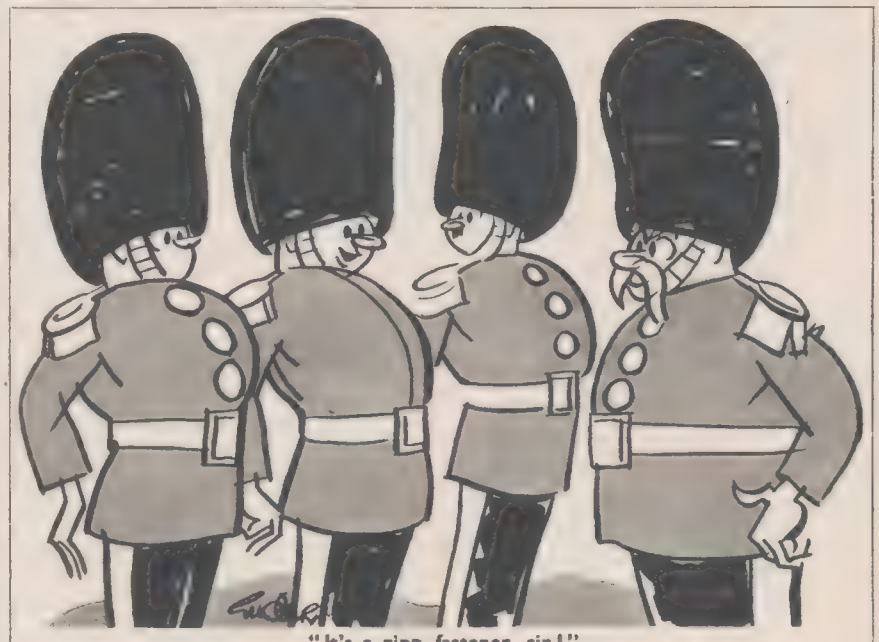
It was only as the door of the cage slammed at the end of this ceremonial that there came an ugly swirl of the dark waters, and the vile snout slid up and into sight. That noise, or some note in the now frenzied chanting, signalled to the beast's age-old instinct that his moment was at hand.

The vile thing swam lazily to within a few feet of the cage, its eyes fixed in a glassy, waiting stare on the white figure within the bars.

The high priestess stepped back towards the lever that jerked down the bottom of the cage, flinging a look full of hate and exultance towards the royal dais.

The muscular executioner left his place on that dais and moved down towards her side. It was he who manipulated the lever. Savaran knew that his moment had come.

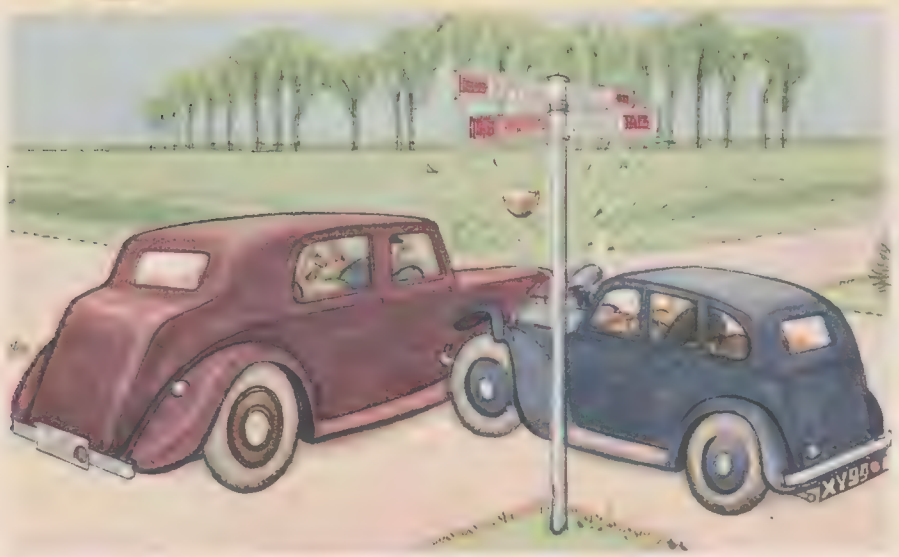
NEXT WEEK
Savaran the Deliverer

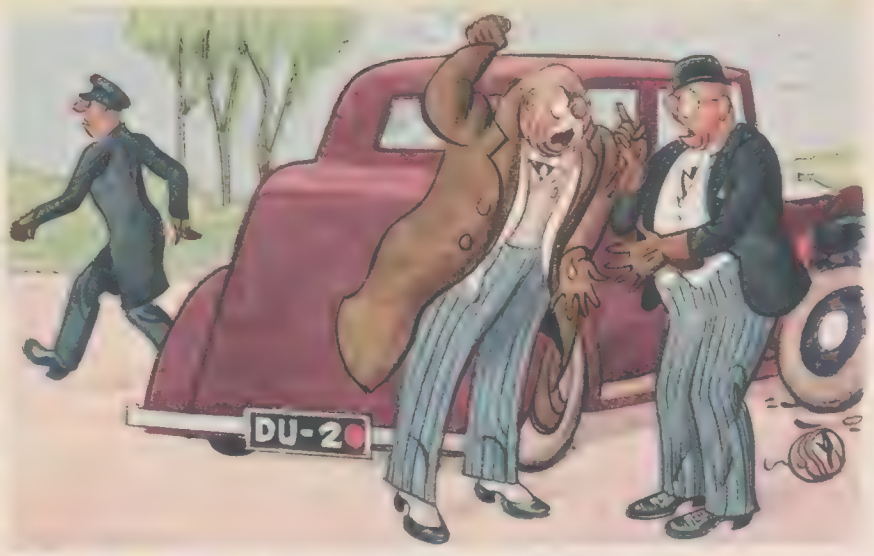


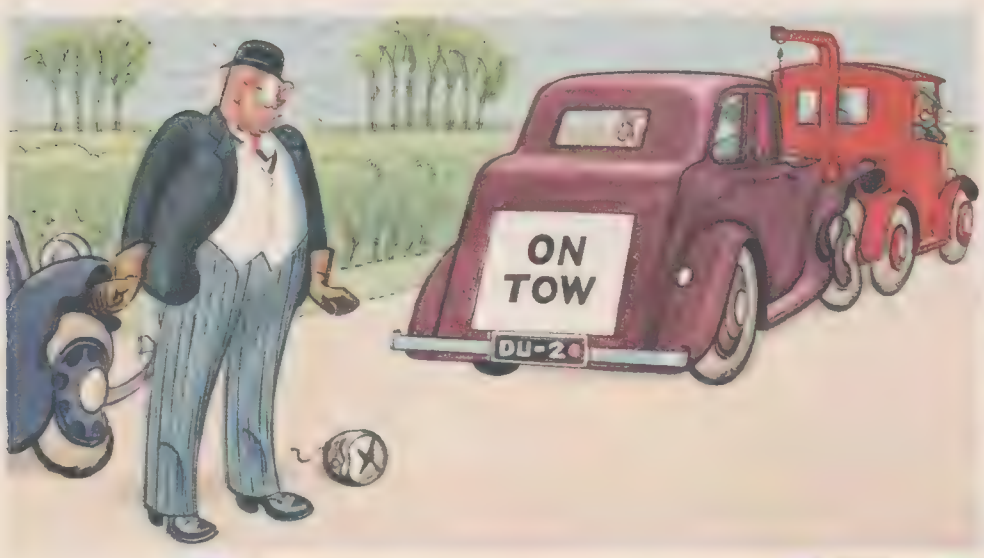
"It's a zipp fastener, sir!"

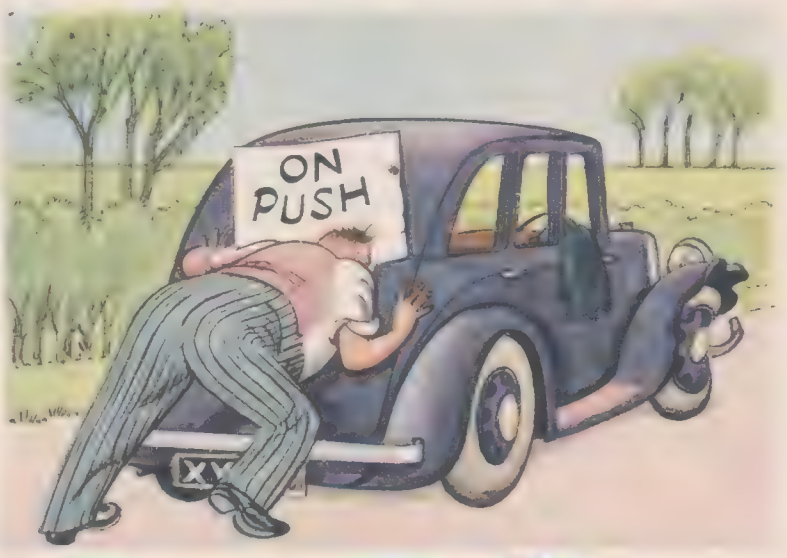
A MAN and Self-Help

by A·C·BARRETT









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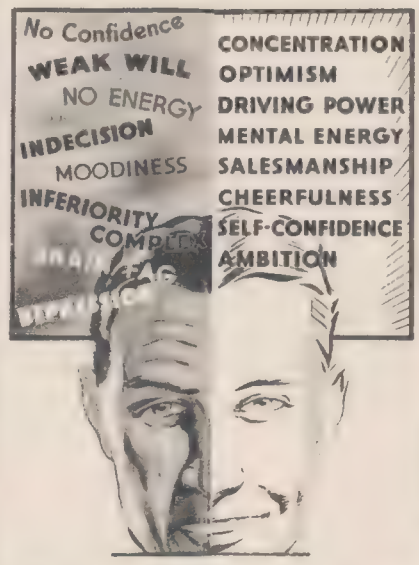

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SAILOR ON HORSEBACK

Continued from page 9

Intent on catching up with Frank, he travelled all night and all day in a box-car, and at Wadsworth slept in an engine cab in the yards until four in the morning when the wipers routed him out. He caught an early morning freight and rode the blind, or space behind the tender.

For Jack, the greatest charm of a tramp life was the absence of monotony. Each day was a day apart, with a record of swiftly moving pictures all its own. At nights he rode the freight and express trains; at meal times he "threw his feet," that is, begged at back doors for a hand-out, or panhandled along the main street.

He encountered hundreds of hobos with whom he beat the trains, pooled his money and tobacco, boiled up, cooked mulligan in the jungles, battered the main stem, played cards, swapped yarns, and fulfilled the dictates of the "profesh," to keep going on the fastest trains.

It was while "throwing his feet" that he developed the art of spontaneous story telling, for upon his ability to tell a good story depends the success of the beggar. The instant a backdoor is opened he must size up his victim and tell a story that will appeal to the peculiar personality and temperament of that victim.

When the going got too tough, when middle-class doors remained locked, when the big house on the hill refused him scoffings, and he could no longer stand his hunger, he would go to the poor section of the town, to the shack with its broken window stuffed with rags and its tired-faced mother broken with labour.

Here he could always find something to eat, for the poor never withheld what they needed for themselves. From these experiences Jack later said that a bone to the dog is not charity; charity is the bone shared with the dog when you are just as hungry as the dog.

Best of all Jack liked the exciting and dangerous contests with the train crews, for he was out to prove that he was the greatest tramp royal on the road, the prince of hobos.

He took incredible risks, jumped off trains that were going at full speed, at one time travelling so fast through the air that he knocked down and stunned an officer who was standing on a street corner watching the train go by. He rode the rods on bad lines, lines on which the brakemen were known to take a coupling pin and a length of bell cord to the platform in front of the car under which the tramp was riding, and let the coupling pin strike against the rails, beating the tramp to death. He was afraid of nothing: the greater the risk, the greater the fun. Was he not a Viking who had crossed San Francisco Bay in an open skiff in a howling north-wester?

When the nights were too cold for travel he went to the roundhouse and slept in an engine cab, and several times went to the electric light works where he slept on top of the boilers in the terrific heat. In the afternoons he would go to the town library to read; at night he always tried to catch the blind baggage of the express. With great delight he writes, "I was determined to hold her down all night, and pursued by the train crew I rode the blinds, the tender of the engine, the cowcatchers, the pilots of the double header, the decks and the platform in the middle of the train."

All these details and a thousand others he writes meticulously in his note-book. The seventy-three page diary of The Road reveals him to be a well-bred and gentle boy in spite of his rough background, nefarious activities and cut-throat associates. The note-book is filled with character sketches of the men he met, stretches of dialogue he overheard, notes on individual stories of how they came to be tramps, railroad and tramp vocabularies, descriptions of towns and scenes and adventures. Though the diary was scrawled in pencil in box-cars, round-houses, jungles and saloons, the writing is literate and lyrical, the charming, unstudied flow of a natural born writer.

Caught in a blizzard at the summit of the Rockies, where he was freezing in an open truck, a friendly brakeman told him that on the opposite track was the Reno detachment of Kelly's Army. When Jack climbed into the box-car he found eighty-four men stretched out, two feet of straw under them, keeping each other warm.

Since there was no available straw on which to step, he stepped on the men, who promptly put him through their "threshing machine," bandying him from one end of the car to the other until he found an unoccupied bit of straw. Thus was he initiated into the Industrial Army.

When they arrived in Omaha at one in the morning they were met by a special platoon of policemen who guarded them until they were shipped across the river to Council Bluffs. Ordered to march in a torrential rain the five miles to Chautauqua Park, where General Kelly was encamped, Jack and his new pal, Swede, a six-foot towhead mechanic, slipped through the police lines and sought shelter. They found a saloon propped on big timbers where Jack spent the most miserable night of his life.

The building, perched in the air for the purpose of being moved, was exposed in a multitude of places, through which the wind whistled. Soaked to the skin, Jack rolled under the bar where he shivered and prayed for daylight. At five in the morning, blue with cold and half dead, he caught a freight back to Omaha and begged his breakfast. He saw the sights, then started out for Camp Kelly but was stopped at a toll bridge. A sympathizer gave him a quarter to ride

all the way to Chautauqua Park, where he reported to General Kelly and was assigned to the last rank of the rearguard.

The railways operating between Omaha and Chicago were hostile, afraid to give the army free transportation for fear of setting a precedent. They filled their trains with armed Pinkerton detectives to ward off Kelly's men. For two days and nights Jack lay with the army beside the railway tracks, pelted by sleet, hail and rain. Then two young ladies of Council Bluffs induced a boy to steal his father's engine, and a committee of Omaha sympathizers threw together a train of box-cars. When the train reached Kelly's encampment it was found to be too small to accommodate the army, and was regretfully returned.

After a number of unsuccessful skirmishes, General Kelly decided to walk his army to Washington, where he would join General Coxy. Taking to the road with twelve wagons loaded with food and camp-stuffs donated by the people of Omaha and Council Bluffs, the army made an imposing array with flags and banners and General Kelly at its head astride a fine black horse presented by an enthusiastic Council Bluffs' citizen.

After two days the soles of Jack's shoes wore off, and he was walking on his socks. He went to the commissary, but they claimed they had no shoes for him. The next day he had such a crop of blisters that he could hardly walk; as a gesture of protest he walked in his bare feet . . . which promptly brought shoes from the commissary.

When the army reached Des Moines the men swore their feet were sore and refused to walk any farther. Stuck with two thousand itinerants, Des Moines put up the army in an abandoned stove works and provided it with six thousand meals a day, while the officials tried to persuade the railways to carry it on to the next stop. The railways declined. Jack rested, played baseball, caught up on his sleep and food. Then the town took up a subscription and the army built rafts to float itself down the Des Moines river.

Sailor Jack and nine other men from

his company, all of whom he termed hustlers, picked a good boat and went down the river on their own. They were always half a day to a day in advance of the army. When they approached a small town they raised their American flag, called themselves the advance boat, and demanded to know what provisions had been made for the army. When the farmers brought forth the supplies, Sailor Jack and his pals took the cream; the tobacco, milk, butter, sugar, canned goods. They were not altogether heartless; they left for the army the sacks of beans and flour and slaughtered steers, but, as Jack remarked, they were living fine.

They disdained to use coffee boiled in water; they boiled it in milk. Jack admitted that this was hard on the army, but then, the ten of them were individualists; they had initiative and enterprise and ardently believed that grub was for the man who got there first.

General Kelly was furious. He sent a light skiff to head off the "advance boat" and when this failed, sent out two men on horseback to warn the countryside. After that Jack and his comrades were met with "the icy mitt," and were forced to go back to the regular army.

In Quincy, Illinois, which someone told Jack was the richest town of its size in the United States, he "threw his feet" for a whole day and returned with enough underwear, socks, shirts, shoes, hats and suits to clothe half his company. He had told a thousand stories to the people of Quincy, and every story a good one. When he came to write for the magazines he regretted the fecundity of fiction he lavished that day.

However, that was the end of opulence for the army. For thirty-six hours the farmers provided no free food. The sun came out hot and strong, spring was at hand, the scents in the air were intoxicating . . . and the Industrial Army began to desert by whole squads and platoons. Jack jotted in his note-book, "Am going to pull out in the morning. I can't stand starvation." All nine of his boat comrades deserted with him. General Kelly pushed on and with a few men finally reached Washington, but by the time he

got there he found General Coxy in jail. He had been arrested by the police for walking on the grass!

Jack rode the *Cannonball* express into Jacksonville, the Kansas City passenger train into Mason City, caught a cattle train and rode it all night into Chicago.

At the post office he found mail from home, with four one-dollar greenbacks from Eliza. He found the second-hand district where he bought shoes, a hat, pair of trousers, shirt and overcoat. That night he went to a theatre, saw the sights and slept in a cheap bed, the first he had lain in for many months. The next day he spent at the World's Fair, then took a boat across the lake to St. Joseph, Michigan, where his aunt, Mary Everhard, lived with her husband and children.

Jack stayed for several weeks in the comfortable Everhard home, wrote many pages of notes, made up for lost meals, enjoyed being spoiled by his Aunt Mary, did a little farm work, and told the Everhards many exciting stories of the road.

By mid-summer he had ridden the rails into New York City. He got into the habit of begging for food in the mornings, and spending the afternoons in the little park by the City Hall, where he could escape the sweltering heat. For a few pence each he bought current books that had been injured in the binding, and lay on the cool grass reading and drinking penny glasses of ice-cold milk.

One afternoon he joined the throng watching a group of youngsters in the street. Suddenly one of the boys yelled a warning, and the crowd broke up. Jack was sauntering towards the park with a book under his arm when he saw an officer coming towards him. Jack paid him no attention. The policeman hit him over the head with a club and knocked him down. Dizzy and sick, he managed to scramble to his feet and run, for if he had not escaped it would have meant thirty days in jail for resisting an officer.

Two days later he rode into Niagara Falls in a box-car, and headed straight for the Falls. Entranced by the spectacle, he remained all afternoon without eating. Eleven o'clock that night still found him watching the dark water under the moonlight. He then headed out into the country, climbed a fence and slept in a field. At five o'clock he awakened and returned to the Falls.

As he walked through the sleeping streets he saw three men coming towards him. The men on either side were tramps, the one in the middle a policeman who demanded the name of the hotel at which he was staying. Unable to conjure up the name of a hotel, he was arrested as a vagrant and taken to the Niagara Falls jail. In the morning sixteen prisoners were brought into the dock. The judge, acting as his own clerk, called out the names of the vagrants and promptly sentenced each of them to thirty days at hard labour.

Jack was handcuffed to a tall negro, a steel chain was run through the links of the handcuffs, and eight pairs of men were chained together and walked through the streets of Niagara Falls to the railway station. On the train he shared his tobacco with the man behind him, who had been in many prisons and knew the ropes, and they became friends.

They were taken to the Erie County Penitentiary where Jack's head was shaved and he was put into prison stripes. Early the next morning he was marched out to the yard to unload canal boats.

After two days of hard manual labour on bread and water—meat was served once a week, and then not until all the nutrition had been boiled out—Jack's friend from the train came to his rescue. The man had found former prison pals among the "trusties," been appointed a hall-man, and in turn had secured Jack's appointment as a hall-man.

It was his duty to serve the prisoners their bread and water, to keep them in order. Jack bartered the pieces of bread that were left over for books and tobacco, or for braces and safety-pins which he would swap with the long-timers for meat.

Once he had become a trusty the halls were open for him to watch what went on. He saw prisoners throw fits, go mad; be whipped down eight tiers of stone steps; beaten to death; indescribable horrors in a torture chamber of helpless derelicts. He became friendly with other trusties, guards, short-timers, long-timers; he came to know hundreds of men, to hear their stories, record their dialects, grasp their philosophies, integrate their backgrounds.

And all the time, in order to keep his job as a trusty, he kept on good terms with his pal. They spent many warm and comradely hours together planning the burglaries they were going to pull off when they got out.

At the end of thirty days the men were released, begged pennies on the main street of Buffalo, and went into a saloon to drink beer. With the foaming beer in front of him, Jack excused himself from his crony, went to the rear of the saloon, jumped the fence and ran all the way to the railway station. A few minutes later he was on board a train headed west.

It took him several months to beat his way across the three thousand miles of Canadian railways. A number of times he kept himself out of jail only by his ability to invent tales which convinced the police that he was anything but a vagrant. Often he went hungry because he couldn't speak French, and the Canadian peasants were afraid of tramps. At last he reached Vancouver, signed on the *Umitilla* as a sailor and worked his way back to San Francisco.

NEXT WEEK:

To Klondyke

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Medical Dream Realised . . . Jacob Ignatz Mrochem, whose discovery of the first soluble and assimilable sulphur ever known has opened the way to one of the most remarkable offers ever publicly made to sufferers from skin disease.

whether their troubles are the result of blood impurity or the after-effects of other illnesses, whether manifested as Sores, Rashes, Pimples or Ulcers, and irrespective of how long they have suffered

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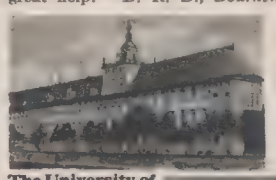

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SCORNED, SPANKED AND CONQUERED

BY W. J. PASSINGHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

William made his escape through a window, reached his horse and rode away immediately. Matilda was found crawling toward her bed on hands and knees, with weals and bruises where no self-respecting young lady could show them

BRUGES, in the year 1050, and very different from the inland city of quiet, sleepy canals which charm the modern tourist. This is Bruges in the heyday of its prosperity as one of Europe's chief seaports, at a time when merchandise from all parts of the known world could find a ready market there. A city renowned for its rich merchants, its maritime importance, its influence as a centre of European politics.

And all Bruges agog with excitement and expectation at the coming of an English ambassador from King Edward the Confessor to the court of Baldwin V of Flanders! The gathering of Flemish nobility at the palace, to receive the English ambassador, formed a magnificent pageant at a period when costume was of colourful and barbaric splendour. Rich cloaks and jewelled weapons replaced leather surcoats and armoured jackets among the nobles, while their ladies made a brilliant show in dresses marvellously embroidered.

On the dais Count Baldwin, surrounded by ministers and warriors, awaited impatiently the coming of the Englishman, and no sooner did the ambassador appear among them than he became the central figure in all the pomp and panoply. In a land famed for its fighting men, never had there been seen such a striking figure as this one.

More than six feet tall, broad-shouldered, with a muscular development which even the ample folds of a richly embroidered cloak failed to conceal, and a shapely head crowned with curling hair so fair that afterwards Brihtric, thane of Gloucestershire, and English ambassador to Flanders, earned another name in Bruges. They called him "Brihtric Meaw"—the last word meaning "snow."

Brihtric's masculine beauty was a sensation among the Flemish ladies present, and even so they could not help but observe the open admiration displayed by Baldwin's own daughter for the handsome Englishman.

Matilda of Flanders, about seventeen years of age when she first saw Brihtric the thane, was a tall and beautiful woman with a fine, powerful figure. She, herself, was nearly six feet in height, and so gracefully proportioned that none noticed it. But it was her hair that made Matilda such a striking beauty—thick, abundant, glorious auburn hair which her son, a king of England, inherited, so that to this day history knows him as William Rufus. The Flemish ladies blushed for Matilda that day, so open was the passion in her big blue eyes for Brihtric the thane of Gloucestershire.

When his mission to Bruges was completed she had Brihtric brought secretly to her own apartment in the palace, and there Matilda proposed marriage to him. His answer, given with the bluntness which characterized the Saxon, left her aghast—speechless with shame and anger.

"I am already betrothed," he said shortly. "The Lady Algitha of. . . ."

"Then curse her, and curse you too, Englishman!" Matilda raved at him with all the fury of a scorned woman. "You will live to remember this day—this very hour!—ere all is done," she prophesied wildly. "Remember me in your agony on a day to come—remember what Matilda, in whose veins runs the blood of Alfred the Great, once offered you!"

She reached upward, swinging a powerful arm, and smacked the tall Englishman's face with a force that sent him reeling away from her. Before he could recover himself, Matilda of Flanders was gone!

The family of Baldwin also had good reason to remember the fiery Matilda in the weeks which followed the interview with Brihtric. Long after the English ambassador's mission to Bruges was forgotten, she was unapproachable, and her sullen temper mystified her parents. Offers of marriage came to her from many courts in Europe, for an alliance with Flanders was a great advantage to any country at that time, but Matilda refused them all.

A year passed, then came envoys to Bruges from the powerful Duchy of Normandy with a proposal of marriage from Duke William himself. It was an offer from one of the most famous warriors in Europe, and one Baldwin could not afford to ignore. He sent for Matilda to meet him in the presence of the Norman envoys.

"Daughter," he said sternly, when she appeared before him, "I have decided upon your marriage with the Duke of Normandy. Your good fortune should . . ."

"Good fortune!" she gasped, striving to control her fury. "You would have me, your daughter, married to William of Normandy—to him whose illegitimate birth is the talk of . . . ?"

"Enough!" he commanded. "I have decided, and you will obey."

"I'll die by my own hand first!" she shouted, and rushed from Baldwin's presence.

Back in Rouen, the envoys reported Matilda's insulting answer to Duke William, and the greatest warrior in Europe was convulsed with rage. William of Normandy was particularly sensitive where the painful subject of his birth was concerned. With only one retainer to accompany him, he rode out of Rouen on the long journey to Bruges. He travelled as fast as good horses could carry him, and none suspected his identity when he reached the palace.

William chose a back door for his entry, and a terrified servant led the way to Matilda's apartment with the point of a Norman sword pricking the middle of his back.

Matilda was in bed when the door swung open to reveal a tall warrior in fighting array.

"Who—who are you?" she faltered, as he barred the door.

"William of Normandy, whom you have been pleased to scorn," he told her grimly, and dragged her from the bed by the scruff of the neck.

Matilda was helpless in the hands of one whom reliable historians describe as a man of extraordinary strength and determination. He spanked her across his knee until she was near insensibility, then flung her to the floor with a crash that startled the whole palace. William made his escape through a window, reached his horse and rode away immediately.

They found Matilda crawling toward her bed on hands and knees, with weals and bruises where no self-respecting young lady could show them. Baldwin demanded the name of her aggressor, and when she told him he refused to believe her story.

"But it's true," she persisted, proudly. "I swear it! He came here alone and—and did it."

"What did he do?" Baldwin roared.

"That's my business," she said. "And now you can tell William of Normandy that I will marry him, and gladly! A man who has the courage to come to my father's palace alone, and repay a deadly insult with his own hands is fit to be my husband!"

When William was informed of this decision, he was delighted, for the beauty of Matilda, as well as her courage, had aroused his admiration. He came again to Bruges, this time with a great company of his nobles and their ladies, to ask for Matilda's hand in marriage. But other and formidable obstacles were at once raised by the Church to this union between two representatives of powerful states.

Pope Leo IX forbade the marriage on the grounds of near relationship between the two parties, although evidence to support this objection has never been discovered. For seven years William struggled against the ban of the Church,

Continuing the "Romance of Red-headed Women" with the story of Matilda of Flanders, who was won by William of Normandy with cave-man tactics. But even when she became the Conqueror's wife she continued to scheme revenge on the Englishman who had slighted her

the intrigues of his own kinsmen, and the opposition of France and Burgundy to his marriage with Matilda. He is said to have fought harder to win his bride than he did to conquer England.

Only his power and influence as a military leader in Europe brought him finally to the altar with Matilda at his side. They were married in the year 1050, at the Château d'Eu—a fortress at the extreme frontier of Normandy—with great pomp and ceremony, and in the presence of a distinguished company representing Flanders, France, and Normandy.

The royal robes worn by William and Matilda at their marriage ceremony were preserved for centuries afterwards in the cathedral of Bayeux. From the Château d'Eu they travelled on to Rouen, and here Matilda was introduced by William as his bride—the first Duchess of Normandy for fifty years.

Nine years later, at the Lateran Council, a new Pope—Nicholas II—granted a dispensation to make legal the marriage of William and Matilda. As an atonement for ignoring the Papal ban in the first place, however, they agreed to build and endow two fine abbeys at Caen.

Their married life was fraught from the beginning with danger and insecurity. Powerful neighbouring states coveted the rich domain of Normandy, and for years Matilda was the lonely wife of a warrior seldom absent from the battlefield. She proved herself a loyal and faithful consort, a very tower of strength to William in his struggle against numerous enemies, and she was beloved by his warriors for her courage and her beauty. Children were born to her in quick succession—first the ill-fated Robert, and then William Rufus, Cecilia, Agatha, Constance, Adela and Gundred. In all, Matilda was the mother of ten children—and two of them were kings of England.

Early in the year 1065 came Harold Godwin to Rouen.

Matilda was still a handsome woman, stately in her maturity, and the glory of her hair was a theme for the bards. How far she influenced Harold in taking the famous oath of allegiance to her husband is uncertain, but that her charms had their part in the vital matter is vouched for by reliable writers. Harold, according to the poet, forgot even his beloved Edith in admiration for Matilda:

"Yet thoughts of Edith's flaxen hair—
Of Edith's eyes of love-lit blue,
Of Edith's glances fond and true,
Of Edith's twining, snowy arms—
Rise mingling with Matilda's charms."

A year later, the news reached William that Harold had broken his oath—was already crowned king at Westminster by Archbishop Stigand! Thereafter all William's energy was concentrated upon organizing that great campaign which is a milestone in world history — the Norman Conquest. He forgot the affairs of Normandy, forgot Matilda, in his efforts to find money and men to build and equip a thousand ships for the invasion of England. When Matilda asked what she could do to help him he answered her curtly.

"There are our children—and your prayers," he said.

Shipyards were constructed along the banks of the Seine and every able-bodied man was pressed to work in building a great fleet of war-vessels. A meeting of Norman nobles took place in the Hall of Lillebon, where, after long debate, they pledged their support in Knight Service and Grand Sergeanty for their fiefs to Duke William.

"Behold," said that powerful baron Fitz-Osborn, "the loving loyalty of your lieges, my lord, and their zeal for your service. They will pass with you over the sea, and double their accustomed service. He who is bound to furnish twenty knights will bring forty; he who should serve you with fifty knights will now gather a hundred."

Meanwhile, William settled his affairs at home by investing Matilda with the regency of Normandy. The duchess was also associated in the regency with her eldest son, Robert—a mere boy of thirteen, who nevertheless was nominally the governor of Normandy in the absence of his sire. Slowly a great fleet of ships appeared in the Seine, and among these hastily-built vessels William searched for a suitable ship to spread his own royal banner. The search proved disappointing until there arrived in the river a ship of war, strange to them all, and the finest they had yet seen.

The name on her bows was *Mora*, and William was amazed to see his own standard flying at the mast-head. Mounted on the prow of the ship was a gilded figure of a youth holding a golden trumpet to his lips. When the ship-master appeared before Duke William he offered the vessel to his service as a gift from Matilda to her lord. Matilda had had the *Mora* built and equipped secretly at her own expense, and William was overjoyed by his wife's gift.

He left her to govern Normandy on September 28, 1066, and she fulfilled her responsibilities with the skill and assurance of a veteran statesman, but Matilda could not govern her young son, Robert. Always her love for her first-born overcame her good judgment, with the result that he plotted against his father to claim Normandy for himself. News of the great victory over the English at Senlac, and of the death of King Harold, reached Rouen at last, to set church bells ringing amid scenes of wild excitement and festivity. Every messenger from England brought tidings of further victories. On Christmas Day, 1066, William was hallowed to king in Westminster Abbey by Ealdred, Archbishop of York.

"Our mistress, Matilda," wrote William of Poitou, the royal chaplain, in a letter to the Conqueror, "has already assumed the title of queen, though she is not yet crowned. She has governed Normandy during the absence of her lord with great prudence and skill. So firmly, indeed, has that authority been sustained that, though the flower and puissance of Normandy has followed your fortunes to the shores of England, not one of the neighbouring princes has ventured to molest the duchess-regent."

It is probable that this glowing report may have influenced the grateful William to write a long letter to Matilda, in which he thanked her for her loyalty, her constant encouragement, and asked her to name a suitable gift from among all the rich spoils of England. To his surprise, one of Matilda's attendants came to England and appeared before William at Westminster with an answer to the letter. Matilda's request must have been something of a shock to the Conqueror. . . .

"There is one among the English lords named Brihtric Meaw, thane of Gloucestershire. He is the lord of broad lands in England—of Avening, of Tewkesbury, of Fairford, of Thornbury, and of Whitenhurst. I claim all his possessions for my own, as your first gift to me as Queen of England. Let this Brihtric be put to a safe prison until I come."

There can be no doubt that Matilda's answer amazed William. He must have wondered how she had come to know Brihtric of Gloucestershire and the extent of all his possessions. History does not record whether William was able to satisfy his curiosity on this point, but all writers on this period are agreed about the arrest of Brihtric. He was taken prisoner at his manor house of Hanelye (Hanley) by William's order, and conveyed to Winchester. Matilda was escorted to England for her coronation by the flower of Norman chivalry, and it is significant that after she landed she proceeded immediately to Winchester.

But what was the fate of Brihtric, thane of Gloucestershire, and the object of Matilda's hatred through many years of a busy life? No record exists to tell the full story of Matilda's revenge, but—according to Leland's Chronicle and the Cottonian MSS., Brihtric Meaw *died in Winchester prison, und was buried privately.*

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"Not so," contradicted Welby. "Somebody came in. I know what I know. I'm not arguing. I'm telling you. Look, sergeant, look. Reflect. Rub a couple of thoughts together"

LIME IS THE THEME

"Let X equal the unknown." said Inspector Welby to Sergeant Lester. "Don't let it remain unknown. You're here to find out." And with a nose for clues, he did

BY HEADLEY BARKER

ILLUSTRATED BY S. CALOW

LITTLE EDWIN BAINES, it seemed, must have been murdered sooner or later in the natural order of things. Employers can play the very devil with their staffs and Edwin Baines, a wisp of a man, almost, indeed, a dwarf, had all but maddened every one of his employees. Perhaps, Welby thought, as he surveyed all that was left of the man who had been such a tartar, it was because of his very smallness that his spleen was ever on tap.

Conscious of his physical defects; jealous, maybe, of normal men, he would use his little bit of power to humiliate them, to provoke them, to set fear in their hearts. Inspector Welby, as he looked at the face which remained a mask of fierceness even in death, could well imagine that there had been scene after scene; that the staff of Baines and Smithson, Estate Agents, Auctioneers and Valuers had worked in misery.

As Sergeant Lester said, when they were left alone with the physical evidence in the office, there were bags of motive.

"Bags and bags of it," he muttered. "As for this last row with Smithson—well, there you are. There's the gun, recently fired, stinking of powder; and the spent cartridge-case actually in the breech. Unpremeditated, of course. Smithson just saw red, and——"

"Ah!" interjected the inspector, "the gun, yes; the cartridge-case, yes. How beautifully simple, Sergeant Lester. Only a matter of two strides to the gallows, eh?"

"Well," said Lester, "you can't get away from evidence, can you, inspector?"

"As to the evidence," said Welby, "we will recapitulate and see exactly what we have got. Baines has a terrific row with his junior partner, Smithson. It is the culmination of a series of rows, all engineered by Baines without a shadow of justification. Smithson, of course, is a highly-strung, maybe a neurotic sort of merchant. We have it on the word of the staff that these encounters left him weak, shaking and pale.

"Very well. Smithson is in love with Baines's daughter, and this last row pretty well puts the tin hat on their plans for the future. Baines, who is leading the girl a dog's life as it is, proposes to send her away; he's dead against the marriage, won't hear of it in any circumstances.

"All right. Smithson is a member of the Leander Rifle Club, and he keeps his rifle, for the sake of convenience, in the office. As the rifle is loaded, it is locked in a case. Two hours after the row Baines walks out of this office into the corridor and is shot through the head. Baines was walking towards his own private room; walking away, that is, from Smithson's private room, which is at this end of the corridor. And we find in Smithson's room the rifle aforementioned, stinking to heaven of recent use, with an exploded cartridge in the breech. Does that cover the ground, sergeant?"

"That's about it, inspector."

"Very well. Assuming that Smithson saw red, two other matters coincide before we begin to draw conclusions—the firing of the shot and the presence of Smithson. According to the evidence, Smithson was a quarter of a mile away, in the Strand Theatre, at the time of the killing. Even though nobody heard the shot fired, it is virtually certain that it killed Baines between the hours of six and seven. Smithson left this building at five-thirty and went to the Strand Theatre, where he had an appointment with the lessee. He left there at six-thirty, and thereafter he walked about for a while, then went to the second house at the Holborn Empire, which is uncorroborated. Could he have returned here before seven o'clock? Ten minutes in the tube and five minutes walking would bring him to this door."

"And, as you have often said," Lester reminded Welby, "the road to the execution shed is paved with perfect alibis."

"Quite right. Now then: to establish the major premise—is it, or is it not possible that Smithson killed Baines? It is. Item two: has or has not Smithson a motive for killing Baines? He has—or had. Item three: is it probable, from the visible evidence, that Smithson killed Baines? It is."

"Every time," agreed Lester, with conviction. "Not one of your favourite cases, this, inspector. A bit too straightforward, eh?"

Welby shook his head. "What's the most remarkable thing about this case? Quickly!"

"Why," muttered Lester, "the—— the——?"

"The?" prompted Welby. Sergeant Lester flushed before the inspector's sardonic gaze. "Remember Euclid, sergeant," went on Welby. "Let X equal the unknown. Don't, for heaven's sake, let it *remain* the unknown. You're here to find out. And you'll never find out if you can't seize on essentials. Doesn't it strike you as a remarkable thing that nobody in this building heard the shot fired? Think of it, man. You're working in an office and somebody lets off a gun in the corridor outside. A hell of a big bang and nobody hears it."

"Well," suggested Lester, "isn't it understandable, with all that row going on outside?"

(please turn to page 35)

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START NOW! This contest (No. 7), closes Wed. 26th Oct.

FURTHER ENTRY FORMS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE SHOP WHERE YOU BUY YOUR OXYDOL, OR YOU MAY PUT YOUR ENTRIES ON A PLAIN SHEET OF PAPER. (DON'T FORGET TO ADD YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.)

EASY RULES — ENTER NOW — ENTER EACH WEEK!

Read these rules of entry most carefully. They must be strictly adhered to:

1. Finish the sentence shown on the entry form below. Write your sentence in the blank space provided, or on one side of a sheet of paper. If you use plain paper, write each entry on a separate sheet. *Send your name and address with every entry.*
2. Attach the package top from any size Oxydol package to your entry. Post your entry to Dept. P.S.7, Oxydol Contest, 10 Smith Square, London, S.W.1.
3. You can send in as many entries in this contest as you choose — provided each entry is accompanied by an Oxydol package top.
4. There are eight weekly contests, each with a separate list of prizes. Prizes in each weekly contest are: First Prize £250 cash, Second Prize £50 cash, and 100 cash prizes each of £2. Prize-winners will be notified by mail.
5. Opening and closing dates are as follows:

Opening	Closing	Opening	Closing
1st Contest Aug. 16	Sept. 14	5th Contest Oct. 6	Oct. 12
2nd Contest Sept. 15	Sept. 21	6th Contest Oct. 13	Oct. 19
3rd Contest Sept. 22	Sept. 28	7th Contest Oct. 20	Oct. 26
4th Contest Sept. 29	Oct. 5	8th Contest Oct. 27	Nov. 2

6. Each entry will be individually considered by a board of judges headed by the Competition Editor of the *Daily Mail*, the Editor of *Woman*, and Mr. W. H. T. Tayleur, the well-known competition expert. The Board will award the prizes to the senders of those sentences which it considers describe in the clearest, simplest and most original way the senders' reasons for liking Oxydol. The judges' verdict must be accepted as final and legally binding. No correspondence will be entered into, neither will responsibility be accepted for entries lost, damaged or delayed in post.
7. Anyone may compete except employees of Thomas Hedley & Co. Ltd., their Advertising Agents and their families. No entries will be returned. Entries, contents and ideas contained therein become the property of Thomas Hedley & Co. Ltd. The names of the major prize-winners in this contest will be published in the daily newspapers shortly after the contest closes, and *all* prize-winners will be notified by mail.

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This entry form is purely for your convenience. You may use a plain sheet of paper if you like. Don't forget to add your name and address.

Entries for CONTEST No. 7 must be received not later than Wed. 26th October.

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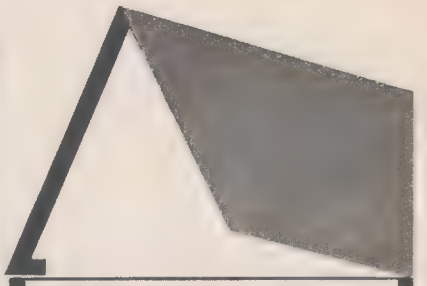

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They were now in the corridor and Welby walked past four of five doors, to the window at the end of it. The building formed one side of a square and directly opposite the name of Baines, newly painted a week or two before by its dead owner, was easily readable on the agent's "To Let" board high above the pavement. The square itself, torn by pneumatic drills, gashed by deep pits, looked like a new ruin; and the combined noises of pneumatic drills, cement mixers and an excavator made a continuous uproar which must have been nerve-racking for the clerks who had to work within hearing of it. From the pavement opposite a fine dust of lime rose in the still air, settling on window-sills and powdering the young leaves of the trees which grew inside the railed-off patch at the centre of the square.

"The row going on outside has volume, admittedly. But the noise of a gun going off has a sharpness, a penetrating power which can be heard above anything. Even if the shot had been fired in the square it would have been heard, for the simple reason that it would be different; it would be a break in the monotony."

Smithson's office window was in Ludd's Lane, one of the narrow tributaries which fed the square with traffic. As Welby threw up the window a lamplighter's torch anchored an island of flame in the river of darkness below, and he had to use his own electric lamp to pick out the two impressions made on the sill. They followed no definite shape, but they were white in parts, and roughly equal in size.

"Well?" questioned Welby.

"Feet," said Lester. "I should say somebody went out of this window."

"Not so," contradicted Welby, shaking his head. "Somebody came in. I know what I know. I'm not arguing, as the chap said, I'm *telling* you. Someday, maybe, you'll be telling me. Look, sergeant, look. Reflect, rub a couple of thoughts together . . . if any."

Welby shone the light of his torch on an iron platform outside the window which formed the landing of the emergency fire-escape; shone it on two footprints, faintly outlined in white.

"I give you those to be getting on with," he grunted. "Also, I would remind you that the barrel of Smithson's gun carries a very light coat of vaseline, with a trace of lime. Lime, Lester, lime is the theme: a white calcium oxide used for building . . . and other purposes; as, for instance, the stimulation of activity in dormant brain-pans."

Inspector Welby examined the rifle once more. It was of the army pattern, with a magazine, firing a .22 bullet. Midway down the barrel, and underneath it, a few grains of lime adhered. Already he had tested it with an insufflator for fingerprints, and he had found the set identical — Smithson's, of course. Smithson, now. A simple, straightforward, rather timid man, so far as one could judge, completely staggered by the crime, shocked beyond measure. Was he only apparently simple? Did his cloak of simplicity hide the cunning of a fox, and the talents of a great actor. At this moment Smithson entered the office. No acting here, surely? The man looked ill.

"I can't get over it, inspector," he said, in a low tone. "It's shocking! To think that poor Baines——"

"But you're not really sorry?" put in Welby, quickly. "It is, in fact, a great relief to you?"

"Surely that doesn't enter into it? One puts aside personal considerations. It's terrible, terrible!"

Welby stared at him, and tried a trap.

"When you came back here, Mr. Smithson," he said, "after leaving the Strand Theatre, what made you come in by this window?"

Smithson seemed taken aback.

"But," he said, "I didn't come back. I didn't come back until they rang me up at my house in Manchester Square to say that this ghastly——"

"All right," put in Welby. "Mind if I look at the soles of your shoes?"

"Why—why, no."

Smithson held them up, one after the other, whilst the inspector carefully examined them.

"You're a fairly good shot?" he suggested.

"Fairly," admitted Smithson. "I get ninety-two out of a hundred when I'm really in form. But surely you're not suggesting——"

"Of course not. I'm not suggesting anything. I see, by the way, that there are various properties in this square to be let, under your name. The keys will be kept on a board?"

"That is correct."

"If a client wanted to view a property he would be given the keys?"

"No. We have a very strict arrangement about that. A man would be sent with the client, and the keys would be signed for. We have a very large business here, and a strict check is kept on all the keys."

"So that nobody could get hold of a key without the knowledge of the person in charge?"

"That is right. As each key goes out it is entered in a ledger, and checked off on its return."

"I see. We'd better see that ledger, I think."

Whilst Welby pored over the ledger, Sergeant Lester scratched his jaw, and wondered.

"I see," said Welby, "that a man named Dalton had this key out about a month ago."

"Dalton, that's right," agreed Smithson. "You didn't see him tonight amongst the staff. He didn't feel well, and got leave to go home at, I think, about twenty past five."

And now Welby's eyes gleamed. All at once he was sunk in absorption. Then his face cleared.

"There's one thing, Lester," he said, "that's been puzzling me about this case; quite a simple thing. How did the murderer ensure that his victim would be in the corridor at the critical moment? Of course, he telephoned. I think we shall find that Mr. Baines received a telephone message of a very urgent nature which brought him out into the corridor at once. And by the way, Mr. Smithson—what sort of shot might Dalton be?"

"Well," said Smithson, "he was a sniper during the war, but that's a long time ago."

As to the telephone message, Welby was confirmed up to the hilt next morning, for Edwin Baines's secretary had answered, to hear a voice announcing that Mr. Baines's daughter was in Charing Cross Hospital and could he go at once?

"I rang through to the card-index room," she said, "where Mr. Baines was."

So the clerks in the office had their second moment of drama when a big, quietly-spoken man with keen, steady eyes stood at the door and said:

"Mr. Dalton?"

Somehow, there was ill omen in the tone. Twelve hearts beat faster; twelve pairs of eyes hovered fascinated, between Dalton and the detective. Dalton turned pale as he faced around.

"Yes?"

"I want you. I have to arrest you for the murder of Edwin Baines. And I have to caution you that anything you say may be taken down and used in evidence against you."

"He was blackmailing me," said Dalton, in the taxi. "He found out that I had a prison record and he held it over my head like a sword. I was forced to work overtime, night after night. He made my life a hell, in lots of little ways. I wanted to get married. It was impossible on my wages there, and there would never have been a rise. I had a chance of another job, but he threatened to blow the gaff. I've no regrets. Life wasn't worth living. He got what was coming to him, and he deserved it. It was a lovely shot, clean through the head at four hundred yards. I wasn't a sniper for nothing."

Later, Sergeant Lester sat at the feet of wisdom.

"A very neat scheme," commented Welby. "Dalton took an impression of the key of the building opposite; the room from which he fired the shot was exactly in a line with that corridor. Also he took impressions of the other keys that he wanted to use: the key of Baines and Smithson's premises, of Smithson's office and his gun-case.

"He had to await opportunities for these matters, but he was determined and patient. As he's said in his deposition, he knew of Smithson's appointment with the Strand Theatre two or three days before, and he let himself in with the duplicate key late one night, shoved the gun down his trousers, and smuggled it across the way.

Whilst all the hullabaloo was going on in the corridor, he was calmly replacing the weapon in Smithson's box, behind Smithson's locked door. Very neat. He thought of everything, even down to the gloves.

"He opened the corridor window on his way out; left early, if you remember, on the pretext of illness. He knew Baines was busy in the card-index room, and most likely would be for some time. He knew, too, that Baines's head would just show above the window-sill as he walked down the corridor—there couldn't possibly be a mistake: nobody else in the whole building was so short. So there you have him, telephoning to say that there's been an accident to Baines's daughter, and waiting, waiting . . . with a finger crooked around the trigger. Not much of a mark, and a lovely shot, as he said.

"Magic? Abracadabra? Divination? No, no, Sergeant Lester—just plain commonsense. If a dozen pairs of ears fail to hear a considerable report which goes off within six yards of 'em, then that report simply wasn't. Further, if they're using lime on the opposite side of the square, somebody must have been there to bring it into the office. And when it's brought in via the window it doesn't look quite right. Lime, sergeant, lime was the keypiece of the jig-saw puzzle. There was lime under the barrel of the rifle where Dalton rested it on the window-sill to take aim. A white calcium oxide, remember, used for building purposes, and other things. Yes, for other things, Sergeant Lester. Eh?"

Calling Woman's Fair

FROM the four corners of the earth short-wave radio enthusiasts will soon be pouring messages into Olympia, London.

The occasion will be the greatest short-wave link-up in history, and is being staged in connection with Woman's Fair and Exhibition at Olympia from November 2 to 26.

In the Leisure Section of the fair the International Short-Wave Club will establish a receiving station, equipped with some of the latest and most efficient types of receivers constructed by members of the club, covering ultra-short and short wave lengths. The station will be used to ascertain the possibilities of radio reception in this vast steel-framed building.

Well before the fair opens, British transmitters will be chatting to far-off friends about arrangements for the link-up. Listeners in this country who have radio covering the short waves will be able to listen to these conversations and at the same time, qualify for an interesting competition which will be run in connection with the club scheme. Ordinary listeners will be invited to see how many stations they can log during certain hours.

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Juvena

Virginia Hall's Page

I HAVE just come from a display given by the Everywoman's Health Movement. People walking behind must have wondered what was the matter with me, for I was so intrigued by some of the exercises that I was trying them out while walking back to the office.

Sali Lobel, who is the founder of this Health Movement, is no muscular Amazon. She looks more like a dainty little ballet dancer, and her aim is to be healthy but not necessarily muscular. Miss Lobel was telling me that she thinks that there is a danger that the English woman of tomorrow will be muscular and over-developed. "Even now," she said, "the size of women's feet has increased in the last five years." This she puts down to faulty exercises.

Miss Lobel, who wants to do away with the "physical jerks" type of exercise for women, has substituted rhythmic health exercises suitable for women of all ages, which do not build muscles.

These exercises are done to dance music and are based on her dance training in Odessa, Paris, Vienna, New York and with Pavlova. There is nothing to be seen which would remind you of a gymnasium; no horse, no parallel bars, no rope climbing. The exercises are simple and graceful, and even your fingers and toes are not neglected.

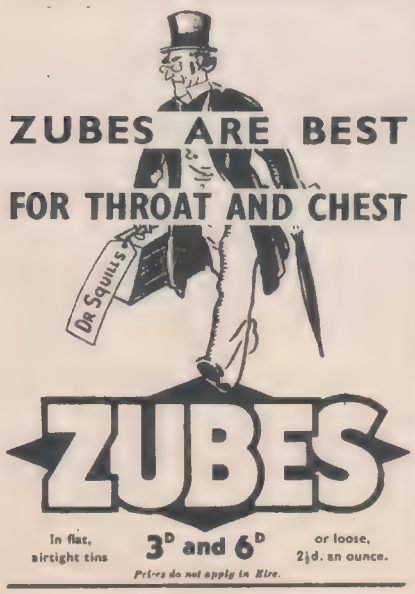
Sali Lobel tells her class how to breathe, how to walk, how to hold themselves—in fact how to be healthy without looking like he-women! Above all, she tells them to be happy, for she says that health and happiness go together.

★ Now that fashion decrees that we shall look as though we are slipping completely out of our evening dresses, shoulders are becoming more and more visible, and many of us may be regretting those days we spent chasing every hour of sunshine we could find.

Shoulders which are muddy looking as an aftermath of sun-tan, are not attractive now that winter evenings and Edwardian fashions are with us. So make up your minds to do something about your shoulders. Don't make up your face to your chin and forget that your neck and arms are also visible!

Give up an evening to the beautification of your face, neck, shoulders and arms by means of a clasmic pack. The action of this pack takes place at the base of the skin, drawing out the very beginning of every type of blemish from the vague greyish or yellowish discoloration, surplus greasiness, extreme dryness, poor colour, and coarse texture, to really distressing problems such as spots, and cases of acne.

Every skin is not the same, so every woman must not use this pack in the same way. If the skin is not in good



INDIGESTION AND FLATULENCE AFTER MEALS

You get burning pain and distressing wind after meals because your stomach is always too acid. Food simply can't digest and your stomach is tortured in the attempt. Why endure this mealtime misery when 'Milk of Magnesia' Tablets will stop it this very day? They relieve acidity and sweeten a sour stomach at once. The stomach starts digesting your food right away and finishes its work with perfect ease. You feel nothing—no heartburn, no flatulence, not a twinge of your old stomach pain. If you suffer from acute attacks of gastric pain 'Milk of Magnesia' brand Tablets will stop them in five minutes. Try them. Neat flat tins for the pocket, 6d. and 1/-. Also family sizes, 2/- and 3/6.

'Milk of Magnesia' is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of Magnesia.

"PASSING SHOW" 'SIMPLICITY' PATTERN SERVICE

THIS is one of the new "kept - up - by - nothing" evening dresses. Or, if you prefer, you can have it with shoulder straps. With this pattern goes a tailored jacket which will turn this formal frock into a useful dinner dress.

The pattern is made in sizes 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20. Bust measurements, 30 to 38 ins.; hips, 33 to 41 ins. Size 16 requires 5⅞ yards of 36 in. material. If you make it with contrasting ruffles and shoulder straps, these will take ⅞ yard of 36 in. material. The jacket requires 2¼ yards of 36 in. fabric.

Pattern, price 1/-, post free, will be sent to you on receipt of your order, giving name and address, number of pattern (2877), and size required. Please mark your envelopes 'Simplicity."

condition and blemishes are stubborn, use it full strength, just as it comes from the tube. Apply a thick coating, leaving it for at least half an hour, then remove with tepid water.

For the average woman, only medium stimulation is needed for normal, rather oily skins. In this case, squeeze out a heaping teaspoonful of pack on a saucer. Add a little warm water to the pack and mix to the consistency of thick whipped cream. Apply this with a small soft brush, and when the pack is dry remove with tepid water. If the skin is tender or very dry use this same method, but instead of mixing the pack with water, use cream, making the consistency that of rather thin cold cream.

If you want just a skin freshener and a quick pick-up for tired skin and a mild bleaching effect, add five drops of lemon juice to one teaspoonful of buttermilk in order to thin a heaped teaspoonful of the pack and apply as in the other methods. And when you are giving yourself this beauty treatment, don't stop at your wrists; a spot of pack on your hands is a splendid prelude to a manicure!

If you want to know more about this pack, please write to me, marking your envelope "Shoulders," and I shall be glad to send you full particulars.

★ Here is a reader's recipe for toasted banana bread. It is easy to make and delicious to eat. Beat up a teacupful of castor sugar and a quarter of a pound of butter. Add four well-beaten eggs, one cup sifted flour, four mashed bananas, a pinch of spice and one level teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda dissolved in a little milk. Bake in a slow to moderate oven in a small loaf tin. Cut in slices and spread with butter.

★ At a luncheon I attended in the country, I thought the table looked both lovely and appropriate.

It was a plain, dark oak refectory table, and right down the centre was a long, low, trough-like dish. This was filled with earth into which had been stuck autumn leaves in lovely shades of browns, greens and russets. Among these leaves were acorns, bright red and orange berries and an occasional fir cone and spiky pieces of fir foliage. You couldn't see the earth which served as the base for all this, because it had been covered with soft green moss.

The table mats carried out this autumnal scheme and I found out that they were the handiwork of my hostess. She had had glass cut in two sizes—seven inches square and four inches square. For each table mat she had used two similar pieces of glass and between these pieces of glass she had arranged a few autumn leaves in varying lovely colours. She had then passe-partouted the pieces of glass together with binding which was exactly the same colour as her oak table.

★ One of my friends is doing two jobs—she's married and she's working in an office. She's been successful in doing two things at once for more than twelve months, but last year there was just one small fly in the ointment. She didn't mind going home to do a bit of cooking, and she didn't mind getting up in the morning to get the breakfast, but what she *did* object to was dealing with fires and going home to a cold house in the evening.

She said last year that she'd find some way out of this difficulty before another winter came along—and she has. She has had a stove put in her sitting-room which is nice to look upon, economical in fuel consumption and, last but not least, needs hardly any attention.

This stove works on the "convection" principle. The air is drawn in through the louvres at the bottom of the stove, and passing behind the fire, is warmed by contact with the outside of the fire casing. It is then expelled outwards and forwards into the room through grills at the top and sides of the stove. The air is thus kept clean, and by being thrown forwards instead of merely rising upwards it prevents discoloration and overheating of the mantelpiece and wall behind the stove. Furthermore, by utilizing heat that would otherwise be lost at the back of the fire, the stove gives 20 per cent more heat for every ounce of fuel burnt.

It has a very good appearance, the general design being streamlined. It can be converted into a cheerful open fire by raising the panel out of sight behind the canopy, and when closed up it becomes a slow combustion stove which will stay in, day and night, at a fuel cost of about half a crown a week.

The room is always warm, even early in the morning. The air is always fresh. And there should be no need for poker, shovel or tongs, because this stove is up to date and practically takes care of itself. My friend is entirely satisfied.

Please write to me, marking your envelope "Stove" if you would like further particulars of this stove.

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in these pages, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help you

★ C. AUBREY SMITH, the veteran actor, when he was in England on holiday, was disappointed in us. He says we have lost dignity, lost a lot of our manners and he thinks that the young men dress sloppily. He said: "Independence is one thing, and I appreciate the fact that the modern girl likes to pay her share, but I hate to see a young man allow his girl to walk on the edge of the pavement. If he raises his hat at all today he raises it with the wrong hand."

Mr. Aubrey Smith must be right, for I have asked five of my men friends, which *is* the correct hand for hat raising and not one of them seems to know the answer. I wish someone would tell me.

'THIS IS THE BOOK that sent me to the BERLEI fitter

'I'm tired of being told I'm out of proportion'

She was about thirty, with a small bust line and really big hips, which should never have been allowed to happen. The fitter vowed to have those hips in control before her client left. She fitted her with model 2441. Model 2441, 22/6. In 7 sizes, 34"-40" every inch.

. . . my dear, she's made my figure

INCHES YOUNGER'

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TRUE-TO-TYPE FOUNDATIONS

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Send for free booklet "IT NEEDN'T HAPPEN"

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Look 10 YEARS YOUNGER

NOW . . See amazing loveliness appear as

This Rejuvenation Marvel Dispels the Causes of Facial Ageing

Without fear of failure, YOU, too, can have a *perfectly* flawless skin. Kathleen Court has discovered the long-sought secret of restoring youthful attractive appearance to "difficult" complexions and ageing skins, and of vastly increasing loveliness in faces losing fineness, or becoming flabby. This unique beautifier is 'FACIAL YOUTH'! Every woman who tries it is amazed and delighted. Swiftly, delightfully, 'Facial Youth' wipes years off your looks—gone are Blackheads, Open Pores, Skin Stains, Shiny or Greasy Nose, Red 'Age Veins,' Spots, Shadows under the Eyes, Dull, 'Mauvy' or Flaking Skin, Lines and Incipient Wrinkles. Instead, your skin becomes undeniably flawless, silky-soft, charming. Your Complexion gains appealing freshness, while the face and neck tissues are youthified and firmed. *There is no mistaking the improvement.* ENTIRELY SAFE. Used at night, 'Facial Youth' soothes, smoothes, nourishes, and restores the skin to the tissue-depths. By day it does likewise, while acting, in addition, as an exquisite and marvellously glamorous foundation for face powder.

A User Writes: "Your 'Facial Youth' does even more than you claim for it. I have used all kinds of expensive creams, but yours is certainly the very best ever. I was rather sceptical when I knew the price as I thought, 'Well it seems very cheap,' but it certainly does restore Facial Youth. I wish you every success.—Gratefully Yours——"

NOTE: 'Facial Youth' Powder is Good. Type 'A' for Dry Skins. Type 'B' for Greasy Skins. Shades: Rachel, Natural, Pearl, Peach, Sun Tan and Evening Tone.

Guarantee: Try Kathleen Court's 'Facial Youth' Cream TO-DAY. Tubes 1/9 and 2/3; Jars, 3/-. If not delighted, money back! Of the better Chemists and Stores, including Boots', or by post from Kathleen Court (Eng.), Ltd., 324K, Regent Street, London, W.1.

Other Effective Kathleen Court Beautifiers are: Orange Night Cream (3/-); Lemon Bleaching Cream (3/6); Skin Tonic Astringent (3/9); Paris Facial Treatment Soap (9d.); Rose Petal Rouge (1/6); Uncrackable Creme Nail Lacquer (2/-); Hennafoam Shampoo (6d.).

KATHLEEN COURT'S facial youth

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P.S., 22/10/38

THE SON OF MAMA 'POSITO

Continued from page 19

Mama 'Posito was magnificent in a fine new dress—black silk with little red flowers on it, and a red-edged ruffle around the V neck. She wore a gold chain the boy had given her—bought of the local jeweller in the village—and her big, gold hoop earrings.

Griswold would have given a good deal to escape that party, but he knew he must be seen there after what he'd said, if only for a few minutes. He found that food—much food in the best Italian tradition—was going round: great plates of antipasto, things exotic to the local palate; and platters of chicken, and perfect mounds of spaghetti, and much home-made red wine. To please Lisa he had a heaping plate of spaghetti and chicken, though he wasn't hungry, and he felt uneasy about the whole business.

But he slipped away early, got his old flivver out of the confusion of parked cars before the house, and drove back to headquarters. All the way he felt uneasy, worried about the kid. Somehow his feeling had changed; he wanted this thing to turn out all right, not only for Mama 'Posito, but for the boy. And what if his past was worse than he'd made out, and he was wanted for some crime? Perversely he was irritated that he should be concerned. He must be getting soft!

One of the young road patrolmen was sitting in the office waiting for him, his putteed legs cocked up on the desk. He'd stopped by with some papers from district headquarters, judging from the envelopes before him on the desk.

"Howdy, Saunders," said Griswold. "Moved into your home?"

The boy brought his legs down, stood up flushing. "Sorry, sir," he said. "I just wanted to ask you about this boy I hear's turned up and claims to be some Italian's son."

"Yes?" said Griswold. "What about it?"

Saunders reached in his pocket for some papers. "Hell," he said, after rifling through them. "I've lost the one about the kid from the Gaspari mob in N'Yawk! Well, anyhow, seems some Italian gang's been run in for a big hold-up, but one of 'em's hidin' out. I thought maybe, this Italian boy havin' just turned up and all——"

"H'm," said Griswold, "too bad you've lost the paper. What more did it say?"

Saunders ran his hand through his blond hair. "Just the usual," he said. "Description, photographs."

"Remember the name?"

"I think it was Jewish."

"H'm. Thought you said it was an Italian gang. Sure it wasn't Scandinavian or Chinese?"

Saunders flushed again, looking very mad and very young. Griswold smiled.

"It don't matter, son," he said. "I'll undoubtedly get a copy of the same paper. But you can check off Tony Esposito; I know all about him. He's been workin' in Trenton. Nice kid, and all right. Now this one they're lookin' for, was he in the hold-up?"

Saunders brightened. "Don't think so," he said. "The Gaspari guy and two others tried to get a sixty-thousand-dollar pay roll. Police got the three of 'em; swell work, too. They want to pump this one they're lookin' for about other jobs."

"Well," Griswold said. "I'll keep my eye out for any strange Italians with maybe Jewish or Scandinavian or Chinese names."

"Yes, sir," said Saunders. "Well, I got to be gettin' on."

"God forgive me for a liar!" said Griswold when he heard the sound of Saunders's motor-bike sputtering out in the road. "Soft, that's what I am!"

But he could see it all so clearly. If the Horowitz boy were sent back, he'd be given the third degree; and if he spilled what he knew, sooner or later someone in the Gaspari mob would get him.

Griswold swore to himself, lighted a cigar, and then addressed one of his confidential banalities to the calendar. "Life's a damn funny business!" he said. "Mighty damn funny sometimes."

It was the next July that he was sitting alone in that same spot making out a report when through the window he saw Tony Esposito draw up in a big truck, hop out, and make for his door.

Tony wasn't wearing fancy clothes now. He had on a khaki shirt and old stained khaki trousers, but he managed to look slick even in them, somehow; the colour the outdoor work had given him was becoming, too.

"Hello, sergeant," Tony said, coming in. His black eyes as they met Griswold's friendly blue ones had lost their old lazy, sultry look. They were as clear and frank as Gaetano's used to be.

"Howdy, son," Griswold said. "Sit down. Have a cigar?"

"No, thanks, sergeant," Tony said. "You mustn't go temptin' me to form any expensive tastes." He dug in his shirt pocket and brought out a squashed package of cheap cigarettes, snapped a match into flame with his fingernail, and lighted one.

"What's this I hear about you and Phil Thomas's daughter?" Griswold asked. "Goin' to hitch up?"

Tony blushed. "Yes, sir," he said. "Mama like it?"

"She's crazy about it! She's embroiderin' towels and things, and goin' over every morning to the church to say prayers so's the first baby'll be a boy. She sure does want a grandson."

Tony's face clouded. "Listen, sergeant," he asked; "Sometimes don't you think maybe I *am* mama's own son, after all?"

Griswold looked at him in silence for a moment, at his eager young face that had changed so miraculously in a year. "I don't know," he said. "Those records at the orphanage didn't tell us nothing either way. You're a mighty good son to Lisa, all right; but as to whether you're her real son, I reckon you'll never know."

Tony flushed. "Thank you, sergeant," he said. And then he grinned. "Only don't tell mama that last. She thinks I look more like Gaetano every day."

"H'm," said Griswold.

"Oh, I almost forgot what I came for," Tony said. "Mama wants you to be sure to come to a party we're givin' Saturday night. It's for me an' the girl. Mama's goin' to make it a regular old-fashioned Italian betrothal party."

"H'm," said Griswold again. "Thanks. Tell Lisa I'll sure be there."

Tony stood up, a bit constrained, to take his leave. They were always awkward together, these two. They could never quite get past the barrier of certain antecedent facts.

But the old sergeant stood up, too, and put a broad hand on the boy's shoulder. "Don't you worry, son," he said. "Whoever you are, you're all right. And your mama's happy, so what difference does it make if you don't know?"

"None, I guess," the boy said. "Only, it's funny, but I'm gettin' like mama. I think I do know. I keep rememberin' things about before I was in the orphanage, and they fit in with what mama remembers about before I was lost."

"That's mighty interestin', Tony; mighty interestin', indeed," Griswold said quite seriously, not permitting a shade of suspicion to colour his voice. "Best of all, I know it must please your mama a lot!"

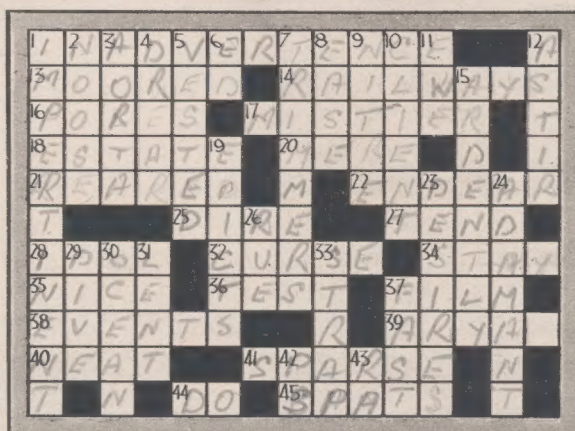
Left alone with his report, Griswold sat looking silently at the smoke from his cigar. He sat there a long time, his eyes on the thin blue spiral. But he wasn't seeing that. He was seeing what had happened nearly sixteen years ago when the treacherous currents had released their prey at last, and he had found the pitiful little body. And he was seeing himself and Gaetano standing with bent heads by a grave they had made beneath the scrub pine.

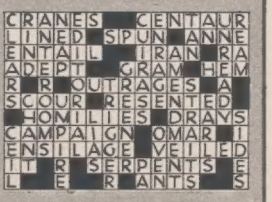
"You will swear never to tell?" Gaetano had said, his eyes tragic in the gauntness of his face. "Lisa couldn't stand to know the truth. Not now, she couldn't. Maybe not ever. Always she will think: 'Sometime the little Tony will come back.' That hope will keep her alive. I will tell only the priest, for he must say a mass for little Tony's soul. But Lisa, she must never know."

While Griswold sat there, the cigar burned out and died. He thought through the strange and tangled skein of events that had put the boy Pete Burelli, alias Harry Horowitz, in the place of Tony Esposito. Lisa had brought a miracle to pass through the magic of her belief. Why, she had even made the kid himself believe it now!

He stretched his cramped muscles at last and sighed, and then confided aloud to the calendar his totally inadequate comment about women. Griswold is like that; but what he lacks in being articulate he makes up in other ways.

FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT





Solution to last week's puzzle

CLUES ACROSS

1. Negligence or oversight.
13. Tied up.
14. Means of transport.
16. Small openings.
17. More obscure.
18. Property.
20. Much less water than in 30 down.
21. Brought up.
22. Rouse affection.
25. Calamitous.
27. Watch or protect.
28. A representation.
32. Imprecation or execration.
34. Remain.
35. Precise to be exact but today suggests something pleasanter.
36. A trial.
37. Thin covering or material.
38. Happenings.
39. Racial term much misused.
40. State one would expect produced by 7 down.
41. Thin or scattered.
44. Heart of 28.
45. An Irishman hides in these garments.

CLUES DOWN

1. Rudely intrusive.
2. May be dangerous round the neck.
3. A rota for important passage?
4. Cheerless.
5. Are such interests partly clothed?
6. The head in brief at the head of 19.
7. Rim terms (anagram).
8. There's comfort here.
9. Can you knit reefers? (hidden).
10. Professional man would so designate a customer.
11. A female on the farm.
12. To introduce.
15. Eagerly.
19. Decrees.
23. Wishes.
24. Common progenitor precedes insect in this hard state.
26. Regret.
29. Plunge.
30. No ace in this expanse.
31. Church season.
33. On this one may hang.
37. Some do this in 31.
42. An addendum.
43. Person of distinction opening 14 across.

B 264

★23★

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L.S.18

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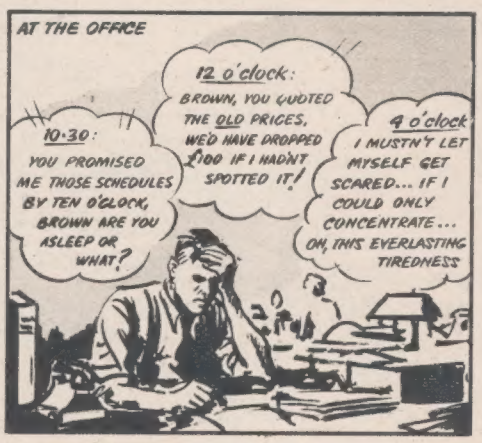

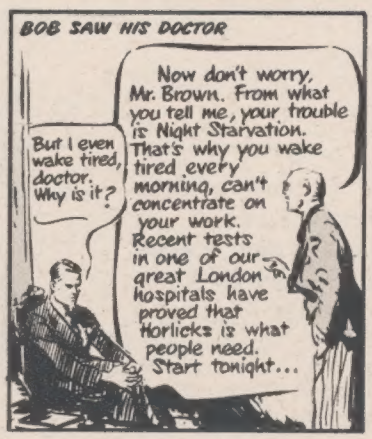

Doctors and scientists co-operate in hospital tests

"Call me at midnight," the doctor said, "and we will begin our tests on the patient."

AMAZING tests have recently been made on men and women in a great London hospital. Doctors wanted to find out why some people habitually wake tired, feel run-down, "nervy," not up to their jobs.

Groups of these people slept at the hospital and each night at regular intervals blood was taken from their arms. It was tested and found in most cases to contain an excess of acid waste products such as carbon dioxide (CO_2). This excess acid waste was activating their brain and nerves, which means that though their bodies were sound asleep their brain and nerves lay wide awake.

When the doctors gave these same people Horlicks last thing at night, it was found that the Horlicks not only replaced energy used up in heartbeats, breathing and other automatic actions, but it also caused complete neutralization of excess acid waste products. The result was that these people woke refreshed next morning. Taking Horlicks regularly at bedtime, they soon regained their full vitality.

Start taking Horlicks tonight. Prices from 2/-, at all chemists and grocers. Mixers 6d. and 1/-.

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